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OUR N.M.P. BOOKSTALL-CAR WELL-PATRONISED AT A SAHARA OASIS

Photo: Pastor Stalley

HIGH LIGHTS IN THE NEAR EAST

REMINISCENCES OF NEARLY
40 YEARS' SERVICE

By

ABDUL-FADY

(ARTHUR T. UPSON)

*Arabic Author, and till recently
Director of Nile Mission Press, Cairo*

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To
MY WIFE

WHO, ON OUR HONEYMOON, DISCOVERED THE
ONCOMING DEAFNESS AND
ROSE TO IT

AN APOSTLE OF THE PRINTED PAGE

Arthur T. Upson of the Nile Mission Press, Cairo, has finished thirty-three years of active service in Egypt. During this third of a century he has been the guiding power in the Christian press of Egypt. One is amazed at the amount of work accomplished by him. Most would consider his "Arabic Simplified" the work of a lifetime. Such is his knowledge of Arabic that he has been perhaps the only foreigner who has ever lived in Egypt who could, unaided, write articles for the Arabic papers and get them published without a correction. During these years of work he has put out, through the Nile Mission Press, over 700 publications, large and small, many of which he has written himself and all of which he has gone over with painstaking care, sentence by sentence, letter by letter. This great stream of Christian literature, *evangelical to the last sentence*, has gone throughout the Moslem world and is a witness to Christ which in its effectiveness, winsomeness, and extent has had no parallel since the day the great Mohammedan apostasy first broke upon the Christian world.

13/8/32. *The Sunday School Times* (Phila.)

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PREFATORY NOTE

I ALONE am responsible for these reminiscences of a busy life; for though this booklet is not intended to be an ordinary autobiography, yet still less is it a "History of the Nile Mission Press": there will be found in it much about the N.M.P. for that has been my life-work, but this is in no sense an official record. Hence the very scanty mention of N.M.P. Founder, Committee, and Staff. Thanks are due to *Blessed be Egypt*, the organ of N.M.P., for the use of matter contributed in days gone by.

What, then, is the main object? It is to set forth my reminiscences of striking spiritual impulses, guidance, etc., which have been to me "HIGH LIGHTS"¹ illuminating a difficult path in difficult lands. Hence the very frequent use of the personal pronoun. Several chapters will contain instances of such guidance.

An earnest gifted missionary has recently written me, asking: "Why have some Christians these experiences and such a strong belief in them?" May not one reply, "To him that hath shall be given"; and "We hear what our ears are trained to listen for."

In view of impending events in the Near East, this may well prove to be a suitable moment to interest the reader in my personal experiences among the Arabs in a number of lands.

¹Title suggested by Dr. D. Barnhouse.

The order of the chapters is, in the main, chronological, but—in one or two cases—we have glanced ahead to collate together “cause” and “consequence” so as to show, *in perspective*, how God guides, and how He answers prayer for progress, “after many days.”

ABDUL-FADY.

HIGH LIGHTS IN THE NEAR EAST

CHAPTER I

A Crisis leading to a Process—Work at Herne Bay—Call to the Mission-Field—Why Egypt?—How I learned Arabic.

“THEN you’re a fool,” said my Father, in response to my confidence, “I want to go out as a missionary.” But my Mother never agreed with him; her attitude was this—“He is my only child, but then I willingly give my all to the One Who gave so much for me.”

In order to understand the above, the reader must hear the story of the great change or “Conversion” which happened to me. My favourite slogan is “ESSEX-BORN, ESSEX-BORN-AGAIN.” Let me tell how it happened.

“ESSEX-BORN.” To some of our many Near-East friends who have *landed* in Essex but never *seen* Essex, this county speaks to them of Tilbury marshes, of low-lying Canvey Island, of mud islands protecting the East coast. But those who know this little “Kingdom of the East-Saxons” especially in the late Spring, revel in the lovely views obtainable from Langdon Hills, Hadleigh Castle, Saffron Walden, Rayleigh church tower, and Danbury Hill, while Constable’s pictures

have made the Stour Valley famous. And what shall we say of Epping Forest? Or of Colchester, the oldest town of Britain? But you should come in May or June, and—so far as possible—keep off the busy main roads; see our country lanes and elm trees, our Colchester roses, and our “garden-villages.”

This county of ours has five times the inhabitants of Suffolk, touching two millions this coming year, while its density is over 1,000 to the square mile!

.

ESSEX-BORN-AGAIN. All I am and have I owe to the Grace of God, for I am a product of the Open-Air Service, by the seaside.

The year 1890 (when I was 16) had a specially wet summer; the harvest was badly delayed and farmers were wringing their hands. Early in September, notice was sent me from the Rayleigh school in which I was a pupil-teacher to take one extra week's holiday, for the boys could not be got back to school until some fresh attempt had been made to gather in the fruits of the earth.

On the Tuesday evening of that extended holiday I strolled past Southend pier and saw a group of workers, from Hoxton, holding a service. At first I walked past them, but felt an inner voice urging me to return. Listening to them, two things greatly impressed me: the one was the hymn: “Lo, He comes with clouds descending”; the other was a solo rendered by a young lady: “I have a Saviour Who's pleading in glory. . . . And oh that *my* Saviour were *your* Saviour too.”

At the close, a gentleman, whom I afterwards learned to love as Alex. Nicholson, of Forest Gate, asked me

if I were a Christian. I remember using the trite phrase, "I hope so." He then asked why I hoped, did I not KNOW? Would not the Prince know whether he were the Son of the Queen? Was I "a child of God?"

He then quoted to me parts of Isaiah 53, changing plural to singular, e.g., "He was wounded for *MY* transgressions." A glimmering of light came, but no more. After prayer with me, he gave me a copy of the God-used tract, "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment." Next day I went away by myself, and lying upon the grass in a park, read the tract, and accepted salvation from the Lord Jesus. The assurance then received led to "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," which, after nearly 40 strenuous years on the mission-field, has never entirely left me. On Friday, 12th September, the closing meeting was held and I have never again met those who held the meetings. Later, I discovered how marvellously it had all been planned of God. Firstly, Mr. Nicholson's holiday had expired the week before, so had mine, but he had received an extra week and stayed on, so had I. Also, we had never previously met, nor had he even seen the open-air group until that evening, nor had I. God brought him from one direction, and brought me a mile and a half from another. Christ found me, and "I know Whom I have believed."

"Oh could I tell, ye surely would believe it!

Oh could I only say what I have seen!

How should I tell, or how can ye receive it?

How?—till He bringeth you where I have been?"

.

HERNE BAY was destined by God to be the place in which I should qualify for my educational diploma

—the “Parchment” as we called it—and, at the same time, obtain valuable training in Christian service. Ah! I worked in those days. From the time of my conversion, I began to atone for two previous years of comparative slackness. My finding Christ—or rather His finding me—*utterly revolutionised my whole outlook upon life.*

It is sometimes thought, by the “bright young things” of to-day, that we older folk moved slowly in our day. Perhaps. Yet, how could they get in more than I used to do, as the following table shows—adhered to for at least eleven months on end, then repeated?

Monday to Friday—Teaching in school until 4.30 p.m. After tea, study from 6.0 p.m. until midnight or even later.

Saturday—Study 9.0 till 11 a.m. Then a weekly journey to Canterbury where I studied Inorganic Chemistry in the County Laboratory for several hours. Back to Herne Bay by 6.0 p.m., then study until the town clock struck midnight. After that, preparation of Sunday school addresses until after 1.0 a.m.

Sunday—Morning Sunday school, of which I was Superintendent, followed by service. Then afternoon Sunday school, and (in summer) Open-air service on the Downs, followed by evening service, and occasionally by an extra Open-Air on the shore. Happy days. No regrets.

REMARKABLE OVERRULING. Let me pause here to remark that, before going to Herne Bay, I had applied for a post at Hitchin. The chairman of the school managers accepted me, and I was on the point of leaving when he said, “Then you will take over duties at once?” “Oh, no, quite impossible, there are yet six weeks until Christmas when my engagement ends.”



THREE OLD FRIENDS AT E.G.M. CONFERENCE
G. Swan, A. T. Upson, W. L. McClenahan

"But we cannot keep this post open; you can take it or leave it!" Brokenheartedly, I returned to Rayleigh and asked the managers to release me, but they were quite unable to do so.

What a blow to a youth of 18 who had only been a Christian for some two years! A suitable and convenient post lost for a mere matter of six weeks' service. And I had thought that God had clearly guided to it. A few weeks passed, and I saw another post advertised, this time at Herne Bay. And at Herne Bay "All things worked together for good" for I found awaiting me, a Christian fiancée, a godly headmaster, a sphere of Christian service, and at length a call to the Overseas mission-field. Truly

"He gives His very best to those
Who leave the choice to Him."

On one occasion, I felt a strong "urge" to hold an extra Open-Air, after the evening service, upon the beach. Mr. Dickins backed me, as in all other proposals for aggressive Christian effort. Carrying the usual folding organ upon my shoulder, I was mistaken for one of the Minstrels, and a gentleman sitting upon the beach prepared to run away. We persuaded him to stay, assuring him that we were quite harmless. It then turned out that he was a well-known and God-used preacher, and he gladly accepted to give the address not only that evening but during the following week. As one result, a young man who had boasted of being an atheist was converted, joined the church, and became an earnest worker.

One temptation which beset me those days was to let my night studies interfere with Church work. A

noteworthy sermon upon Matt. 6: 33, "Seek ye first," greatly influenced me, and I then decided to keep up the weekly meeting even though I failed in my exams, or—what would have been worse—had my name recorded as a third-class pass, a "scrape through." But it was difficult, for the examination was a competitive one, and my hundreds of rivals had trained collegiate aid to push them through. However, God helped me to do it, and I found myself, after two years' studies and practical work, the possessor of a First-class diploma. "Them that honour me I will honour."

HOW was I led to the mission field, and ultimately to Arabic literary work? It may interest some of our younger friends to hear the story. But, at the outset, there is one important point—that God guides us one step only at a time.

The first link in my chain of guidance was a study of the Holy Spirit and His enduement for service. Having caught scarlet fever from one of my pupils, I was sent to an Isolation Hospital. Not being very ill, and various papers having been sent to me, an article upon the Holy Ghost in some Holiness paper caught my eye. It was new ground to me for, like many other Christians, I had very vague ideas about Him. The author's name has long been forgotten, and even the name of the magazine, but the result remains. Turning up all the passages in my Bible, and having plenty of time for reflection, I accepted His enduement for service.

The following summer I went home to Rayleigh for holiday. On the first Sunday in August, the "call" came to me, not as yet for overseas service, but to

devote my whole time to the service of the King. It was at the time of the evening service that the hymn rang in my ears, "God calling yet, shall I not hear?" That night the matter was settled with my fiancée who was with me, and the great decision was registered that my work in life must be the preaching of the Gospel of the Grace of God. But How? and Where? That was not yet clear—one step at a time.

The next link was a visit to Herne Bay of Rev. R. Wright Hay, who had lately returned from India. He took a line not always taken by missionary deputations, i.e., he subordinated the interests of his society to the interest of the Kingdom of Christ as a whole. One half of his address was taken up with an appeal to crown Jesus as King of the whole life, whether in home work or overseas missions. He gave interesting illustrations from his own work in India, but he was not obsessed with his own work, as so many are. His theme was "Crowning Jesus King." Did the cause suffer? Not at all; God is no man's debtor. This was one link; another was with Rev. W. Dickins, who had himself offered for Egypt, his successor being Rev. Douglas Brown.

One Herne Bay worker, himself an earnest Christian, said that my decision to apply for overseas work was a great mistake. However, like St. Paul, "I consulted not with flesh and blood" (Gal. 1: 15-17).

To the Valley of the Nile. Having been accepted by the North Africa Mission after a part-time theological course at Harley College as an external student, I spent a happy year in preparation, giving part of each week to Arabic whilst living with Mr. and Mrs. Glenny at Barking.

October 31st, 1898, was the great day of my arrival in Egypt. The seven young men who founded the

Egypt General Mission all arrived the same year, and the happy friendship and co-operation with them has continued to this day. On arrival, a fez (properly called tarboush) was lent to me and next day I bought my own; that habit of wearing similar clothing to the young "effendies" that I was working among—a cherished habit of mine—was kept up until after I left Cairo in 1931. (Christians, in Egyptian towns, wear the same; unfortunately Syrians and Palestinians quite often copy the latest European style in hats, which, to my mind, is nearly as bad as the Turkish attempt to write Turkish in European characters! Christ honoured the East, He never apologised for it.)

Where was my fiancée, Miss Kitty Philpott? Left behind for two years' training at Doric Lodge, Bow, and then a year of Arabic. We had anticipated waiting until I should have earned my parchment diploma in 1897. Instead, we placed our all upon God's altar, and volunteered for overseas service. Marriage was thus delayed until July 1901, an engagement of seven years in all. Not our way, but His way, and His is the better.

"If He had let me take the pleasant way
Whereto my steps were bent,
The path where birds sing in the boughs all day,
Shaded and well-content,—
I had not found beyond the leagues of sand,
Toilworn, the mountain crest
From which mine eyes look over to that land
Wherein shall be my rest.

If He had let me slumber as I craved,
Pillowed in grasses deep,
Beside the stream whose murmuring waters laved
The silver coasts of sleep,—

I had not heard His footsteps drawing nigh
Across the lonely place;
Unknown, unloved, they would have passed me by,
Nor I have seen His Face.”¹

HOW did I learn Arabic? Having been asked, by junior workers in Egypt, to answer this question in writing, I will give my own personal experience, which has naturally led to very definite personal opinions. No apologies.

Firstly—at Home. Whilst I was studying theology at Harley College as a part-time student, Rev. Milton Marshall, of N.A.M., gave us all a most valuable drilling in the written language—a complete pictorial map of the whole language, so to speak—with the result that when we reached our respective fields and heard the first colloquial sentence, strange as the pronunciation may have sounded, we were able to recognise it and trace it back to its original.

Secondly, on arrival at Alexandria, a good teacher was provided and four months were spent at colloquial. Then followed two months quite alone at El-Atf,² talking with none but Arabic-speaking Moslems, using Arabic for my shopping, visiting and every other purpose. At the end of six months on the Field the first Arabic address was delivered with some fear and trembling.

Finally came what one might call a post-graduate course in the SYNTAX of the language and in original composition such as writing essays. For this, a good sheikh was provided by the Mission, but only for a few hours each week. I myself was working at the

¹ Quoted in *Record of Christian Work*. (Author unknown.)

² Now an E.G.M. station.

language from eight to ten hours a day. Planning my own schedule, this was divided into morning, afternoon and evening. The morning of four hours was divided into eight halves of 30 minutes each, one of which would be devoted to Al-Quran, the next to Colloquial, then an essay, then chemistry, logic, arithmetic, geography and other Arabic subjects. Afternoons were devoted to (a) giving theological teaching to a convert, or (b) walking to a nearby village, talking as we went, and talking whilst there. In the evening, either a meeting (more talking) or newspaper reading.

Two mottoes were before me: 1. "With God all things are possible; 2. What man has done man may do." As a result, God enabled me to do a great deal in my early days, not knowing then that I should be cut off from hearing the language! During my first year, I read the Arabic New Testament, hunting for all unknown roots—during the second, the complete Bible—during the third, the Quran. After that, a daily paper was read each evening or in odd moments. (READING is of vital importance to the student. Probably I read 9,000 dailies during the next 30 years. I was fortunate, however, in being superintendent of the Nile Mission Press, with not too good a staff, so that I simply *had* to correct Arabic proofs, and even MSS., being my own "publisher's reader." Hard work, but capital exercise.)

The object of mentioning all this detail is to show two things:—That being "apprehended" or "arrested" by the Lord Jesus Christ converted a very ordinary semi-slacker into a diligent student; further that so-called "handicaps" can be, and should be, converted into stimuli, or stepping-stones to higher things.

CHAPTER II

Prayed back from the gates of death—Threat of Expulsion—Work with the “Bengal Tiger”—Marriage without funds.

THE N.A.M. Conference having decided to open a station in the province of Menufiya, C.T. Hooper and I were sent there. Dr. Harpur had visited that rich province and done medico-evangelistic work from the C.M.S. houseboat, but no residential station had yet been opened, although the population was well-nigh a million souls, almost all of them Moslems.

Shebeen-el-Kom being the capital of the province, we took rooms there on our arrival, 6th November, 1899. Those temporary rooms soon proved inadequate for our purpose, for the Coptic landlord, who lived below us, objected to our bringing Moslems into his house. What then were we to do? After much search and prayer, we rented a house overlooking the river.

The removal of our belongings and the furnishing of a reception-room with hardly any funds to pay for it, greatly tired us, but I did not then know that through visiting Moslem shops in the market I had caught disease of some kind.

As I was feeling very ill and having to stay in bed, Hooper fetched a Syrian doctor who was an acquaintance of ours. As he thought it might be smallpox, he recommended my being taken at once to the German Deaconesses' hospital at Alexandria, 100 miles away.

Well wrapped up, I was taken down by train and put in the Isolation Ward. Then ensued such an illness as I have never known. On Saturday, 24th February, the doctors and nurses thought it advisable to cable to England as a preliminary warning, for during the week-end the doctor in charge considered there was very little hope of recovery. It was somewhat of a shock, when consciousness returned, to find a mass of black pustules which had "run together," hence the name "*Confluent* Smallpox." Two days and nights of delirium were followed by two more of semi-consciousness, and then I began to mend.

What had been happening in the meantime? When the cable reached England, our fellow-Christians were informed that my case was in the balance, and therefore "Prayer was made without ceasing unto God." One dear man, Mr. W. Denyer, shut himself up that night and spent three hours in prayer, until he received assurance that my life had been spared. Thus did I come back from the very jaws of death.

It was a complete recovery, for on 13th March I sat up, on 18th went into the garden, on 24th left hospital, and on 25th took a two miles' walk. Even my face showed little trace of what I had been through, for the loving care of Sister Helena had prevented pockmarks. Eben-Ezer. Imagine the relief to parents far away with no other child, and to the one who was in training preparing to join me.

HAVING returned to our mission-station, a local sheikh challenged me to debate the claims of Christ with him. We were young in those days! Older men might have thought twice about accepting. However,

one was greatly helped, both to catch the opponent's argument, and to reply to it in polite Arabic. The hardest thing of all was to pin him down to the subject, for he was "as slippery as an eel" and had an audience of a dozen fellow-Moslems all in agreement with him.

Shortly after, others came down from Cairo from the same institution (Al-Azhar) and one of them sought to parade his learning before me.

"Let me prove to you the apostleship of our Lord Mohammed by pure logic."

"As you will. Proceed."

"Good. Now, to prove a syllogism we need two premises, from which we will draw the conclusion."

"Go ahead."

Major premise: Verily God hath sent forth apostles. (Admitted.)

Minor premise: To every apostle He hath given a book. (Not always, but never mind, go ahead.)

Conclusion: Therefore He gave Al-Quran to our Lord Mohammed.

The reader will hardly credit the difficulty I had to explain to that Azhar-student that his syllogism was "not proven." To him it was clear as daylight. Truly, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" especially with a modicum of prejudice.

After these encounters, things began to hum.

Mr. Summers, of N.A.M., had, on leaving for his new work in Morocco, handed me a large box of no less than 10,000 tracts, printed from an Arabic translation of a valuable pamphlet by James Monroe, C.B., called *Quranic Testimony to the Christian Scriptures*.¹

¹ Very much used for a "first approach." Thousands sold at N.M.P., Cairo.

I was to circulate these for him. Almost as soon as we started at it, two learned sheikhs marched into our house and gave me a bad quarter of an hour.

“Listen, ye English. For years you have been corrupting our people by circulating your Bible—and we know that that version contains no mention of the coming of our blessed Prophet, upon him be prayers and peace—but now your iniquity has overflowed and reached the top of the canal bank (an Egyptian proverb) and will soon overwhelm us all. For here, in this infamous tract of yours—I ask pardon of God for soiling my lips with mention of it—you have actually attempted to corrupt the perspicuous Quran.”

“But what have we done?”

“In this tract, when quoting Allah’s words to our Lord Mohammed (upon Him be prayers, etc.) you have changed the words ‘their error’ (i.e., the error of the Christians) to ‘thy error’ (i.e., Mohammed’s). Now we are going to expel you from our town for altering those words.”

Asking to be shown the alleged mistakes, they produced THREE. I then promised to go very carefully over the whole pamphlet and to print a sheet of corrections, to be inserted in every single copy. At last, after much talk and many threats they agreed to give me three days to print it; then they left our house to talk elsewhere.

Shall I ever forget the next night and day? Not having been properly equipped with technical books, I could not search a Quran-Concordance—as I could in later years—so had to hunt right through the Arabic Quran for every quotation, and there were many scores. At midnight I went to bed to toss about, and after breakfast resumed my search, which lasted until night.

The result? This: that when the sheikhs said THREE mistakes, they had grossly under-estimated, for I found THIRTY-THREE! Oh the humiliation of it! Yet it was no fault whatever of mine, nor probably of Mr. Summers', save that he had trusted a Syrian Arabic proof-reader and an Egyptian printer. I had never seen the tract until it was handed to me. Never again!

That severe lesson was by no means lost upon me. Never again should a native printer be trusted with such confidential work; if I ever published my own I would read every word by myself. Through the Nile Mission Press (told of in Chapter IV) I was able to carry out that decision.

.

“THE BENGAL TIGER who had become a lamb.” This was the title given by the Moslems of Bengal to Mr. James Monro, C.B., at one time head of the Metropolitan Police, at another Head of the Bengal Police. To the great surprise of the millions who had been kept in order by him, he retired from the Service and—in his old age—founded the Ranaghat Medical Mission, staffing it with members of his own family. (When his own family broke down in health, C.M.S. took it over, but that was later.)

Monro took up the matter of his tract, of which I have just told the story, and being—like myself—aghast at the printer's errors, paid for the corrections which I duly printed and inserted in every copy.

He then asked me to do a little literary work for India. The *Epiphany* of Calcutta had inserted some articles by Monro proving Mohammed to be a sinner in need of a saviour and that out of his own mouth.

The chief of the newly founded Ahmadiya sect—now so well-known as the most “missionary” Moslem movement, though by no means orthodox—took up the matter and replied saying, “But our Lord Mohammed is nowhere in the blessed Quran called a *muznib* (sinner).” Monro wrote to me to ask me to answer that point. By this time I had acquired a Concordance and so was able to look up the whole subject. My reply may be summarised:

The word *muznib* is not used of Mohammed for the simple reason that that word is never used in the Quran of anyone at all! But the word *zanb* (sin) does occur, and is specially predicated of M. Now, what does *zanb* mean? Apart from the dictionary renderings in *Lisan-ul-Arab* and other great lexicons, let us examine every instance in which it occurs. Of the 37 occurrences, sometimes it means murder, once or more adultery, many times rebellion against God. Is not that sin? Yet this is the very word used of M. himself in the verse addressed to him: “Ask pardon of God for thine earlier *zanb* and thy latter *zanb*.”

That article, inserted in full by the *Epiphany* produced some consternation in the ranks of the Ahmadiya sect whose leader El-Qadiani promptly consigned me to perdition. “Monro was bad enough, but this Egypt man is intolerable.” Still, India is—or was!—a land of free speech, and more articles followed from both sides, our editor summing up and pointing to the Sinless Christ.

Why such controversy?—you ask. Well, workers on the Moslem mission field were fighters in those days and sooner or later a worker had to stand against the wall and fight for his position. Further, this was India where public street preaching (and consequent

controversy) were the normal form of work. However, we do not now use such methods, *nor do we find such bold converts now.* A fact!

MARRIAGE, like all good things, comes to him who waits. We had waited about seven years, and the fiancée having come out to the Field and taken a course of colloquial Arabic, we thought that now all would be plain sailing. Alas, our funds had recently come to an end, the meagre sum put by for our marriage having been spent upon "daily bread." What then? We prayed and sought guidance, and came to the joint conclusion that God would have us go straight forward. What? Without funds? Yes, without present funds, but we knew we had a rich Father, and so we stepped out, saying:

"Before us lies an unknown sea,
The past we leave behind;
Strong waves are foaming at the prow,
The sail bends to the wind.
Sometime, we know not when or how,
All things will be revealed,
And, until then, content are we
To sail with orders sealed."

Wonderful answers to prayer were received, gifts of furniture, books, money, etc. Rev. W. and Mrs. Dickins acted as Father and Mother to us. Our dear friend, Elias Thompson, of E.G.M., whilst passing to his eternal rest, was worried over the £5 which he wished to send us; after his passing his executors carried out his dying wish, little knowing how much £5 meant to us. But testing soon began again. On our honeymoon we discovered unmistakable signs of

deafness coming on, and at first the prospect filled us with dismay. But God brought us through. (The story is told in Chapter V.) Then funds fell off so much that we had to go home to a partially unfurnished house. Still, God was teaching us in the furnace of affliction. From the first, we laid down three basic principles we would by God's grace observe in our home:—

1. Owe no man anything.
2. Give God a share of everything.
3. Every day, after lunch, pray for funds.

Now, looking back 35 years, we find that by God's help we have carried out our principles. Whether we have had a recognised allowance or no, we have, when at home together, always prayed together for funds. And our path has brightened more and more. Ebenezer. Jehovah Jireh.

WORRIES soon appeared in the shape of a Moslem convert whom we will call Sheikh I. Let me summarise the story of his conversion. He tells me that when a student in Al-Azhar he one day interrupted his professor and asked him, "Why does the Quran say—'If in doubt ask the 'People-of-the-Book' (meaning the Christians)?" The professor struck him, shouting, "Nasrany" (meaning—you are a Christian yourself). Chaos ensued, and ultimately the Head of the Azhar had to hold an inquiry. Our sheikh proved to them that he was a Moslem and the son of a Moslem. But they suspected him after that.

On leaving, he opened a school to earn a livelihood. One evening, passing C.M.S. school, Cairo, he entered a special evangelistic meeting then being held. When

he heard the blood of Christ mentioned, he got angry, raised his stick, smashed the lamp, and so broke up the meeting. After some days the missionary allowed him in again on condition of making no remarks whatever, either of approval or condemnation. But he arranged with other ex-students to break up that meeting by means of a trick. Having scattered themselves in different corners of the room, they—at his signal—rose and chanted the Moslem creed. When the missionary put out his hand to stop him, Sheikh I hit the hand severely with his stick and hurt it badly. The Egyptian evangelist then begged that he should be sent to prison for bodily assault; but the missionary said, "I came here to preach the GOSPEL, and that Gospel teaches me to love my enemies." Sheikh I was thunderstruck. Then Hollins, the missionary, gave him a Bible with his bandaged hand.

Eventually Douglas Thornton baptised this sheikh and sent him down to us (N.A.M.) for further training and to get him away from persecution by his enemies in Cairo. Thus we had, in our new house, a "stormy petrel" who perchance needed the oversight of more experienced men. During his stay with us we were besieged by parties of sheikhs trying to get him back to Islam. At last, in an evil moment, he left us, and they brought him round the town and past our house to display their trophy. The worry of it nearly killed us. However, after a fortnight or so, he found out their evil intentions towards himself and left them, and came back to Christ, and to us.

Now, to-day, we praise the One who doeth all things well, for our friend Sheikh I is still engaged in Christian work in Cairo, and has a good wife, herself a convert. But see Eph. 6: 12, 13.

CHAPTER III

Life-changing seen "after many days"—Meaning of "casting bread upon the waters."

How few people know the meaning of Eccles. 11: 1, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." What bread? And what waters? And how find it again?

The "waters" are the Annual Inundation or Overflow of the Nile. According to the ancient system of irrigation—now being superseded as national finances allow—a "basin" of the Nile valley (Upper Egypt) might be anything from two or more miles by perhaps five or seven, i.e., up to the edge of the cultivated area. All around this would be a high and firm bank or dyke. At the rise of the Nile, in early August, a culvert would be opened and the water would cover the basin to a depth of two or three feet and would be left for several weeks to thoroughly soak in to the soil. The "bread" alluded to was the seed-corn which the fellaheen (peasants) literally cast upon the surface of the waters, for they themselves waded in the rich black mud with such water as remained. This fertile alluvial deposit was quite famous in bygone days and caused the abundant crops, from which Egypt got the name of Granary.

"After many days . . . some an hundredfold." How apposite are the lines of W. Hall¹:

¹ *Via Crucis* (Simpkin Marshall).

“ Cast thy bread upon the waters, thou shalt find it yet again;
When the floods have all subsided, see the bladed sprout-
ing grain
Flushing with a pale green mantle all the warm, moist
steaming plain.

That which seems thy toilsome efforts hopelessly to mar
and spoil,
And the sanguine expectations frustrate utterly and foil,
Needed nourishment supplieth wherewith to enrich the
soil.

For the turbid swollen waters in their teeming bosom hold
Floating silt that, fall'n to earth, shall form a fertilising
mould
Wherewithal the soil well-nurtured shall yet yield a
hundredfold. . . .”

Just three illustrations of this great truth.

1. During our early days in Alexandria there came to the mission-house not a few young men of various nationalities. One such—we will call him P.—was a recent convert; a Swiss by birth, he came to tea every Sunday afternoon to have the fellowship and prayer he so much needed, for Alexandria is not exactly suited for the growth of spirituality.

Years passed, and through our residence in Cairo we did not hear that P. had grown cold and at last backslidden. But God never left him. After 35 years we met him again, this time in Jerusalem. He then told us how, through a serious illness, he had been visited by the earnest Scottish minister in Alexandria, and how he had through him once again “laid hold upon eternal life.”

But the disease which ultimately carried him off to the Better Land was Earth's greatest scourge, and

there was no radium in Egypt, so he came up to be treated at the Hadassah hospital, residing (under observation) at the C.M.J. hospital. Occasionally he was able to get out to a service but more often his friends visited him and prayed with him. Said a Christian doctor to me, "I never saw a dying man so much alive!" Then, in 1935 he was laid to rest in "sure and certain hope."

Cancer on the tongue? Agony? Indeed, yes: but he showed that he was upheld by "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." The explanation is —JESUS.

2. A Copt. Some 60,000 of the million Copts (nominal Christian Egyptians, descended from the Ancient Egyptians) form the Protestant Community, while about 22,000 of them are communicants of the Evangelical Church. Many of these are true "children of God"; would that all were.

In the spring of 1929 a Protestant Copt called at the Nile Mission Press, and asked to see the director himself. As I was very busy, my assistant, Mr. John Menzies, was asked to interview him. The dear man refused to see anyone but myself, for his was intensely confidential business! At last we got him to write down his story. Here it is in his words:

"Do you remember that on 21st November, 1902, you spoke to me at Shebeen-el-Kom, I being one of your school teachers? You said to me, 'Brother, *when* were you born again?' I could not then give a direct reply for I did not then know the Lord as my personal Saviour. On 16th May, 1906, whilst taking a Sunday afternoon rest, I had a vision: my Lord appeared to

me in a blaze of light like electricity and I heard a voice exhorting me to say these words: 'Thou, O Christ, hast prepared salvation for me through the Precious Blood.' I said the words aloud, and accepted Christ as my Saviour from that day."

When asked why he had let 23 years elapse without telling me, he pointed out that we had left Shebeen in 1903. At last he felt impelled to tell me about it, for—as he said—though a mission-school teacher and a member of the American mission-church, yet he had, until his conversion, despised the blood of Christ! Now he rejoices in it. Note the dates:—Sowing, 1902; Harvest, 1906; but "Joy in harvest" only in 1929.

3. What can God do for a Moslem convert? What can He NOT do? Are we to limit His operations to "the Usual," that to which sad experience has accustomed us? Are we to say to Rhoda, "Thou art mad," when she tells us that prayer has been amazingly answered? (Acts 12: 15). My old friend, J. Gordon Logan, speaking at the Annual Meeting of Nile Mission Press, 14th June, 1921, told the following. I quote his words, only adding that the pastor also mentions a Gospel in his own account of it. There is usually more than one spring to a river-source. Said Logan:

"Away in Upper Egypt there was a boy at the village school who was so naughty that he was put out of the school. There fell into the boy's hands a pamphlet printed at the N. M. Press, written by a man who was once in the great Al-Azhar; it put plainly and simply the truth concerning Christ and redemption through the Blood. The boy read it and the message came to his heart with power, and he began to confess

Christ in the village where he lived. Those in the village were going to pour paraffin over him to set him on fire and burn him to death, but he was rescued and sent away to Belbeis where he was taken in and educated in the school. When I went down to Ramleh the boy went with me and was baptised in Alexandria. He is now a fully-qualified evangelist and is about to be set apart to work amongst the native Moslem converts."

Looking back to 1906 and on to 1936 our dear M., the pastor referred to, summed up his life to me, as he is about 45 years of age:

15 years a Moslem boy.

15 years Christian student, evangelist, etc.

15 years ordained pastor and CONVENTION-LEADER.

From 1906 to 1936 is 30 years, which equals the "many days" of our text, and so we see the pastor's life in perspective. The picture of him and myself (on the wrapper) shows us at an E. G. M. Conference during a moment's relaxation. Some may have met and heard this dear pastor at Keswick Convention in 1933. Then they will pray that God may keep him still humble enough to be usable.

CHAPTER IV

64,000 deaths from Cholera—Essay-writing in Al-Azhar—Overcoming difficulties of deputation work—Does Evening precede Morning?

“Lâ hoal wa lâ quwa illa b’illah” announced the head of the house next to ours. These words—here written as he pronounced them—were the formal announcement of death in the house and were succeeded by a rising chorus of wailing from the women. And this was only one of a score of cases in our town. What had been happening in the country?

The Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca had taken place in the late spring of 1902, and, as usual, the pilgrims had drunk filthy water and been troubled with various grades of diarrhœa. Precautions had been taken by the officials, but perhaps too late. By the first of August the visitation was diagnosed as an epidemic of cholera.

My wife and I were alone at Shebeen, for reasons to be mentioned shortly, and we daily waited with a certain amount of dread for its appearance in our town. When it did appear, the day-and-night wailing was terrible. No doubt many died of sheer fear, largely accentuated by the wailing from all parts of the town. During that period we were so short of funds that my diary records with what joy we received some remittance from the Mission, for “I had changed my last shilling that evening.” It is clear, then, that we

had no reserve of funds for even necessary precautions such as disinfectant. What, then, could we do?

Communicating with praying friends, we begged for prayer, and we ourselves, in our little nest, read Psalm 91 morning and evening for weeks. "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee."

The death-wail next door was very harrowing to the nerves and the Arabic papers were full of scare-mongering. Further, the nearest known European or American was at Tanta, over 20 miles from us, or would have been, had they not been away during August. Nevertheless, my diary records far more concern about two other matters—funds on the one hand, and preparations for opening a new boys' school on the other. There seem to be, in the diary, only two entries referring to this the greatest of Egypt's epidemics: on 11th August is recorded, "Heard that the dreaded cholera (which had been about the country) entered Shebeen two days ago; all is well."

Yes, all was well, even although the river—our only source of drinking water—was said to have been polluted by cholera corpses thrown into it at dead of night. When the cooler weather came, and the medical officers issued their report, they deduced the number of deaths to have been 64,000 in Egypt alone; for 32,000 had been officially registered as reported by the headmen of the villages and another 32,000 was considered to be an understatement of those who had

disappeared from villages where the headmen dreaded government reports more than cholera. Why bother about counting dead peasants? Plenty left!!

Meanwhile, arrangements for our new boys' school went steadily on, and provided an outlet for thought and prayer in days when the one topic everywhere seemed to be "cholera." When the school was opened, in spite of the cholera panic, and the violent opposition of certain Moslems, 110 boys turned up on opening day, and 50 more a little later.

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WHY were we alone?—might quite reasonably be asked. At the end of January we had had a very appreciated visit from Miss Van Sommer who, whilst staying within our little home for two evenings, had propounded two schemes which were manifestly of God. One was a mission-press to publish Arabic Christian literature, the other a rest-house at the coast to be called "Fairhaven." As a step towards preparation for the former, we applied for early summer leave (June and July) to enable us to inspect the excellent American Press at Beyrout, Syria. We left on 24th May, and after a fortnight at Beyrout, got about four weeks of most refreshing change at Suq-el-Gharb, Mt. Lebanon. Whilst in the hills, I was enabled to write my first original tract in Arabic, called *Christ's Testimony to Himself*, of which ten or more editions have since been published. On 23rd July, the anniversary of our wedding day, we returned to Shebeen, and my colleague took his leave, little thinking what an epidemic was about to sweep over the land.

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WHAT hopes and fears centre around a first furlough. Particularly when young parents hope to bring back their firstborn with them. And simultaneously are released to new work.

Before sailing for England, a new thing was attempted. Miss Van Sommer desired that I should pass some kind of Arabic examination to "prove myself to other people" as she put it—but there was, in those days, nothing whatever of the present system of taking a new missionary, pulling him, pushing him, squeezing him into a mould, and eventually turning out a specimen moulded "according to standard." Standard! That sums up the process. In those days we had no "mass-production" and no "standard." We were like Egyptian children of whom someone said, "Of the many children born, the weak ones die off, but the strong ones are *really* strong."

Not knowing of any other exam, I applied to the Ministry of Education, and they would have accommodated me, but not for an Arabic exam. alone, nothing less than the baccalaureate exam. taken by the higher school lads. But how could I climb *down* to that and be examined for a week upon subjects I had studied years before, meanwhile neglecting the one thing needful—ARABIC? Eventually, through the mediation of Dr. Watson, the Grand Mufti, Sheikh Mohammed Abduh, was gracious enough to arrange an informal examination over Al-Azhar itself, to the disgust of the sheikhs who were ordered to set the questions, well knowing who and what I was. Further, I gave no bakhshish to anyone. And the exam. being quite unofficial became informal. What a chance for the sheikhs. They tried to trip me by setting me to write

an essay upon "My reasons for studying Arabic!" From the Mufti himself, I received every courtesy, and he gave me a signed letter complimenting me. This was of use to me at that time.

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KESWICK Convention is quite unique. The uplift does not seem (to me) to come so much from the helpful addresses but rather from the "atmosphere," at least it seems so to me, every time I go. What appealed to me on my first visit, then a young man of 29, leaving established work to start deputation work for the proposed Nile Mission Press, was a sermon by Dr. Harry Guinness based upon Ps. 108: 10, 11, "Who will bring me into the strong city? . . . Wilt not Thou, O God?" WHO? . . . GOD.

The problems of literary work in Cairo (though mountains high) were still a year off; what the young novice felt to be "Hill Difficulty" was the problem of deputation work, not how to speak, lecture, etc., but how to get the meetings to speak at! There was also the additional complication of the birth of our only child, Philip (named after the doer of a Noble Deed—Sir Philip Sidney) and the attack of typhoid fever which made the young mother's recovery a precarious matter. Still, God brought us through, in answer to many prayers.

It was a difficult thing to undertake, for I went, for example, to Scotland with introductions to only two people, Miss Emma Blackwood, sister of the publisher, and Miss Millar, now Mrs. Logan. No prayer-helpers then, just these two friends and others (e.g. Miss M. Graham) who gathered round us. At the end of two

months we found that not only had God opened the door to all sorts of circles—Professors of Semitic languages, eminent Church workers, etc.—but I had organised and spoken at 60 meetings. How we prayed in those days!

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IN January, 1905, we left England once again, this time to establish the Nile Mission Press in Cairo. Mr. John L. Oliver became General Secretary to the mission.

On arrival in Cairo, and after taking our first premises, three men gathered in an upper room to form the first United Literature Committee—they were Rev. Andrew Watson, D.D., Mr. George Swan, of the Egypt General Mission, and myself. Happily Mr. Swan is still with us. W. H. T. Gairdner (of C.M.S.) who joined us at the very next meeting, has now, like Dr. Watson, entered upon the “Larger Life” above. How much we owed to those keen colleagues. That United Committee is still, even to-day, very much alive after 31 years. We had to pioneer our way “upon our knees” for we were the forerunners of every united activity.

We trust that the plans laid in those early days were “according to the pattern showed us in the Mount.” Certainly the N. M. Press has always stood, and still stands, for loyalty to the Divine Word, and to the Revealed Word.

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THAT reminds me of a story, which may be permitted as I am writing personal reminiscences. A young minister having preached in a church I was attending, and having displayed vague, nebulous views, called upon me because he had heard that I was

objecting. He expressed to me sheer amazement that the heads of a respectable publishing-house could hold conservative views! Said he: "But surely you do not believe the early chapters of Genesis?"

"Certainly we do."

"But they contain strange things."

"For example?"

"Oh, that phrase 'evening and morning.' Everybody knows that morning precedes evening."

"Really!! How long have you been in the East? Do you not know that the Coptic Christmas Day commences the evening before? And that every day in the Moslem calendar commences at sunset? See the date on any Arabic newspaper, and watch the Eastern feasts. In the East *evening always precedes morning*. And the Bible is an Eastern book."

One might have added that it is a beautiful thought that every sunset is followed by sunrise.

CHAPTER V

“Lord, open his ears” (An intimate talk).

THE following story has been told to not a few other deaf people and been found by them very helpful; that is why I write this very *personal* chapter. One outstanding “High Light” in my career has been what some sympathetic friends have called my “handicap.” On our honeymoon we discovered signs of oncoming deafness. The little woman I had married rose to it, and has been the greatest help all along the way. Not all at once did it develop; like most trials it came gradually and the early stages were the more trying, for later on we had got used to it, and so had one’s colleagues!

No doubt the grave attack of confluent smallpox mentioned in Chapter II had left behind some tendency to deafness, especially in the left ear, but I could still hear with the right one.

In 1906 a Cairo surgeon said that the only trouble was the existence of a “burr” in the left nostril, which was causing deafness in the left ear; if removed all should be well. He performed the operation and received his fee. As he soon afterwards died, I have never been able to tell him what I got out of it. Nothing but blasted hopes and injury. The direct result was a spreading of the deafness to the right ear also; for, as a specialist afterwards informed us, “That was an error of judgment on your surgeon’s part.” Hard on

us? Yes, indeed; yet, even then, we were able to say with the poet:

“ In the centre of the circle of the love of God I stand;
There are no second causes, *all* must come from His
dear hand.”

The N.M.P. Committee have always been patient and considerate. Not all English folk, however, have patience with a deaf man; they seem to me to joke about the deaf in the humorous papers, but not about the blind! Our Eastern friends are, generally speaking, more helpful. Sympathy in the East is always on the side of the “underdog” whether poor, afflicted, or ill-used.

After some years, a friend sent me some beautiful verses which we will insert, though not knowing the writer's name, or the address of the sender. And that will end the first part of my story—the stage of acquiescence.

“A SOUND OF GENTLE STILLNESS”

(*Heb. of 1 Kings 19: 12*)

“ He came to me in love and tenderness
And touched my ear;
‘My child, canst thou believe ’tis best for thee
No more to hear
The music sweet I gave so lavishly
To thee so dear?’

I could not answer Him, for bitter grief
Choked all my voice;
I needs must suffer and endure the loss,
If such His choice;
But losing such a gift—He would not think
I could rejoice?

He saw my grief—my bitter tearless grief—
And, drawing near,
With tenderest love and pity spoke again:
'Child, dost thou fear?
In "sound of gentle stillness" thou shalt find
Thy Lord is near.'

So now, though ever missing that dear gift,
My soul hath rest,
And fain would tell to others with closed ear
How fully blessed
Is life to those who own
God's will is best."

THE second part of this very personal narrative was unfolded in 1908. A minister near Keswick took care of our little boy whilst we attended the convention. Being interested in "Divine Healing" he suggested that I should be anointed according to James 5: 14, 15. The anointing was duly performed, and the prayer offered, yet no result seemed to come. Then, whilst outside the great tent, I seemed to hear for two or three minutes, after which, all faded again. What was God wishing to teach me?

Having to relieve another man in Cairo (Mr. Gentles) I was obliged to leave Keswick early to catch a steamer for Egypt. On arrival at Port Said, Mr. A. Locke gave me lunch at the Sailors' Rest, for we were old friends. Having heard my story during lunch, he knelt with me and prayed thus: "Lord open his ears that he may hear."

During the hot afternoon I rested, to prepare for the long journey to Cairo. In the stillness God spoke to me, saying, "Give that brother some help, for he is in need." I replied, "Lord, Thou knowest that

my earthly possessions consist of one pound, a ticket to Cairo, and one shilling for my luggage."

"Give him the pound."

"It is all I have until the end of the month."

"Well, give him it."

"May I not give him one-half?"

"No."

Before leaving for the station, I offered my pound and at once it was joyfully accepted. After a moment the dear man said, "But who told you I was in need of a pound?"

"The Lord told me."

"How could you hear? I thought you were deaf."

Then he suddenly clapped his hands, and ejaculated, "Ah, I see, I see!" He had prayed after lunch, "Lord, open his ears that he may hear," thinking only of hearing the sounds of earth through the *outer* ears, but now he suddenly realised that I had a *second* pair of ears—inner ears.

That remark of his set me off upon a new line of thought. The phrase, "Evangelise your limitations," takes on new meaning when one adapts, develops, *improves* upon the idea of submitting or tolerating! Not acquiescence but triumphant co-operation with thanksgiving.

May I quote from the *British Weekly* of 9/1/36, a paragraph or two from a discourse by Rev. Dr. Reid, of St. Andrew's, Eastbourne? He says:

"But what are the real handicaps of life? That is what we need to be clear about. We are apt to think of them as things in our circumstances. Some people, for instance, are poor and have many dis-

advantages. They are apt to imagine that these make any real success impossible. Others are physically crippled. Accident or disease has taken from them some physical power. They feel their defect and may be discouraged. But are these things real handicaps? We have only to look around us to see what has been done by such handicapped lives. Countless people have had a hard time and few advantages, but in spite of them they have fought their way to a place of distinction. Many have gone through life maimed in some form, but in spite of it they have produced some of the finest work in every sphere of life. Milton was blind. Beethoven was deaf. John Keats was an invalid. Stevenson was a consumptive. The list is legion. St. Paul had what he called his "thorn in the flesh," and said so little about it that we do not even know for certain what it was. He prayed that it might leave him. But he could not get rid of it. The answer to his prayer was that God's grace was sufficient for him.

"We say of these that they did great work 'in spite of their handicaps.' Should not we rather say that it was *because* of them? Those who have had such handicaps and overcome them would say that they were a stimulus rather than a hindrance. They were like the resistance in the electric bulb that makes the current burst into light. That was how they accepted them. We cannot always choose our circumstances, but we can always choose the spirit in which we shall meet them. Handicaps can quicken courage and endurance. They can develop hidden capacities. They can throw us back on God, whose grace is always sufficient for the task in hand."

CHAPTER VI

Freedom (?) in the Old Days—An amateur Marriage Bureau.

LET me try to describe what was involved in conversion in the Old Days, then let us look at the same case, "after many days."

Away in Upper Egypt, over 200 miles south of Cairo, lives and works Colporteur Y. He tells his story in his own words, but I have assisted him to calculate the date, and have added a few comments.

He says that he was born at Akhmim, about 60 miles past Assiut, or 67 by river. He was a Mohammedan, and by trade a weaver. Some American missionaries held services there, and he with others heard them preach upon undreamt-of topics: e.g., how sin came into the world, and that all have sinned, and that the only way of salvation is by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He then started to read the Bible, comparing it with the Quran, and at last he became convinced that there is "no other way." His people would have severely persecuted if they had known that he was secretly attending those meetings; six other Moslems were, however, doing the same.

About the year 1886, when he was aged 24, persecution broke out, and the seven fled for their lives. In those old days there was not merely the petty persecution to which converts are even now subject—the penalty then was DEATH, and public ignominious death

according to the strict teaching of Islam, which never changes its principles though its practice may sometimes have to observe political considerations. Further, Upper Egypt was not, then, connected with Cairo by rail and so the distance of 300 miles left the local governors power to practically do what they wished. Also, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff was just then advising England to terminate the British Occupation in three years. Where could these seven poor refugees go?

Fortunately for them, the American missionaries had a training college at Assiut, which is down-stream from Akhmim, an important point, for the only way was for them to float downstream in a Nile barge. The head of the college at Assiut listened to their story and promised them shelter. When their pursuers arrived, Dr. A. ordered the "Stars and Stripes" to be run-up to the masthead, and then dared the Moslems (even the authorities) to cross the threshold which was "American ground" under the Capitulations. The pursuers retired baffled for the time, but did not give up the chase. Y.'s relatives were instructed to hide themselves in the neighbourhood of the school. One day Y. went out to buy food and met his relatives, who beat him nearly to death. They then took him by force to the Governor of the province, who imprisoned him for three days hoping to "knock the nonsense" out of him. After the three days, he was examined before the Governor who entreated him to return to Islam. On account of his absolute refusal to return, and also having regard to the protection given by the American missionaries, he was at last set free. But where could he go? Once

more he had to flee for his life, this time 250 miles to Cairo. But Dr. Harvey and Dr. Watson helped him there.

He was baptised not by the Americans because of his views on "Believers' Baptism" but by a Coptic priest. After some years he was allowed to settle on the north side of Assiut province, where he married and set up a Christian home, and did some simple farming. (As to the other six refugees, five of them passed in time to the "Better Land" while one was an evangelist of E.G.M. for many years.)

About the year 1908 Y. applied to me in Cairo to be appointed a colporteur for the distribution of religious books. After due inquiries, he was appointed. He has worked faithfully ever since, and is still (in 1936) carrying on, though perforce moving a little slowly in his old age. He says most emphatically, "I know WHOM I have believed."

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ANOTHER story of a convert, though of a different kind. Y. is an Egyptian, but Istephanos was a Palestinian Moslem convert, though of Persian ancestry. When this man fell into loose ways and went back, his old friends MacInnes and Gairdner would not let him go, but fished him out and brought him to me at the Nile Mission Press, for us to teach him to set type to earn a living. But all our attempts failed, and I left for furlough, somewhat worried.

Whilst in England, we were staying at the House of Rest, Eastbourne, and having spoken about Istephanos (Stephen) I could not get him off my mind. Earnest

supplication was made to God that night that he might be rescued, crying "Lord, I know not how, but anyhow, at any cost."

Unknown to me, MacInnes had just then made one more attempt to dig out his convert from a bad street and once more he had been brought to N.M.P. A letter came to me from Cairo, and it seemed God's will that he should be given one more chance, but at different work. When I returned to Egypt, he was much more humble, and so I took him over to my new colportage department, and tried to teach him to make parcels of books for the colporteurs. But, though of good family, he suffered from what we now call "inferiority complex" and having been used to failing seemed determined to continue to fail. Consequently it took me seven months to get him to tie his parcel in such a way that the books should not fall out on the way to the post office. But at last he improved and rendered good service.

It is essential that a young man convert should be betrothed and married as early as possible, provided that a suitable wife can be found for him "in the Lord," and so C.M.S. friends helped towards a solution. Three Moslem sisters, trained in Mrs. Bywater's school had all accepted Christ, and the eldest had been married to Sheikh I, whose story was told in Chapter II. We arranged—of course with the cordial approval of the parties most concerned—that the second sister should be betrothed to Sheikh B. at a religious service, leaving the third one to Istephanos. We attended their wedding, and watched their children grow up, for he worked for us for years. Then we lost touch for a time.

After the deliverance of Jerusalem by Lord Allenby, our friend was tempted to take wife and children to Palestine to try to claim a share in his father's property. Alas, he did this at the expense of his faith. Later on, he developed lung trouble on which he sought Christ once more. Coming back to Cairo, he was reconciled to his friend Gairdner and once more made profession of faith in Christ, on which he was received back into the church, and died a Christian.

“ Safe home, safe home in port;
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provision short,
And only not a wreck.
But oh! the joy upon the shore
To tell the voyage perils o'er.”

CHAPTER VII

“Thine ears shall hear”—Instances of Guidance—Our “Twice-Born Turk”—Arrival of “The Whirlwind.”

“WE hear what our ears are trained to listen for,” wrote A. E. Theobald in the magazine of the Algiers Mission Band for Jan. 1936. Much emphasis is being placed upon Guidance nowadays, and probably a few illustrations from my own experience may be found helpful.

1. After the Edinburgh Conference there was concerted opposition to missions. Among the measures proposed was the offering of a prize for the best *Khutba* or mosque-sermon. On reading the notice about it in the Arabic daily, I spread the matter before God. Almost at once came the sudden inspiration, “Imitate them!” Rising from my knees I took pencil and paper and outlined the idea. The *khutbas* which we then began to publish contained nothing but Scripture teaching. Soon the news spread that we had had the audacity to publish Christian *khutbas* in style similar to the mosque ones. The first three weeks we sold 8,300 copies. Many hundreds of thousands were afterwards distributed in Arabic from Morocco to Iraq, while—for other language areas—permission was readily given for translations to be made into Urdu, Turkish, Swahili, Pushtu, Sindhi, Kashgari, Malay, Javanese, etc. As with all our publications, these *khutbas* were loyal to

Holy Scripture; they merely anticipated my later slogan—"OLD MESSAGE, NEW METHODS."

2. Spending a week-end with missionary friends, I was asked—with practically no time for preparation—to expound a passage. The message given me was Joshua 14: 12, "Give me this mountain," with its sequel in 15: 19, "Springs of water." *How* did Caleb get water to give away? Why, from his mountain! The lesson is that, when God inspires us to do so, we should *volunteer* for the "mountain", the exceptionally hard post or lot. (This message has been greatly used of God to many, and the notes of it can be found in my *Outline Chalk-Talks*,¹ p. 32.)

At the close, one of those present told me that their "Field Conference" had moved him from a place where he had been happily working and located him at a place which was notoriously difficult. He had at first refused to go there, but after hearing this talk upon Caleb volunteering for the hard post, he would accept to go.

"Is not His will the wisest?
Is not His way the best?
In joyful *acceptation*
Is there not perfect rest?"

THE "Twice-Born Turk" was a striking character. Born on a small island called Ruwād, or Erwād, whose history dates back to the Phœnicians, he was sent to us by missionaries in Syria. (When I call him a Turk I mean a Moslem, although Syria was then under Turkish rule.) As my wife was in England I was

¹ Can be obtained from the Nile Mission Press, Cairo, for 8*d.* post free, or on sale at meetings for 6*d.*

occupying a room over the press, while this old gentleman—who, on his conversion to Christianity, took the name of Abdallah—occupied a room on the roof, his wife having been left behind in Syria as she had refused to leave Islam with him. We two men were both very lonely and were glad of fellowship with each other. Many were the stories he told me of the East under Turkish rule, and also under the Revolution. One of his books which I have translated to English is called *A Twice-Born Turk*.¹

Several attempts were made to get his wife to join him, but her family indignantly refused. At last a letter came, asking him to sign a repudiation of authorship of any of our publications, as these were being talked about all over the East. That letter was a death-blow to all his hopes. He came downstairs to me, and we knelt in prayer, he praying along this line, "O Lord, I have lost both wife and son, and now I have nothing left but Thee; but I have never had such peace in my life before." Bidding me good night, he went upstairs. There he had a vision; the Lord appeared to him and said, "Abdallah, have you lost her?" . . . "Yes, Lord." "Leave the whole thing to Me; I will bring her."

As I was due to go on furlough, my passage was booked for April 18th, and Abdallah and I made special prayer that she might come to Egypt by the day I left. As I had to go to Suez on the 16th to meet Dr. Zwemer, I did not hear details of the answer to our prayers. It seems that she actually came from North Syria by steamer to join her "apostate" husband and that boat

¹ Of N.M.P. as above, 1s. 6d. post free. Parts of it were published, at the time, by the *Missionary Review of the World*.

reached Port Said on the 18th, the very day my steamer sailed. What a coincidence, some say. Nay, rather, a miracle. "Who? . . . God."

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THE "WHIRLWIND" was Dr. Zwemer. One report of a Keswick Convention spoke of him thus: "It was not mere 'logic on fire' it was fire itself, running with prairie-like speed, and sweeping all before its onset with resistless force."

An invitation had previously been sent to Zwemer to come to Cairo, but he returned to the Persian Gulf. However, after the Lucknow Conference, he accepted to come to work in co-operation with various bodies in Egypt. On 16th April, I roused him from bed at Suez, where he had disembarked from a steamer. He soon founded the New York Committee of the N.M.P. which developed into the American Chr. Lit. Soc. for Moslems.

Some of the most interesting of our publications were Zwemer's series, all illustrated. And on his long tours in all lands he urged workers to make more use of the printed page.

CHAPTER VIII

“China D.V.”—Co-operative colportage—Staying in Egyptian houses.

THE best-equipped missionary to Moslems never reached his field but died in Cairo on his way there! William Borden, the “millionaire missionary” as some thought him, had journeyed round the world inspecting mission-work, had graduated in arts, etc., had taken a theological course and been ordained, and had now come to Cairo for a short, intensive study of work among *Moslems*. Already interested in the N.M. Press, he had remembered us in his will before he sailed from U.S.A. His signature in our visitors’ book gave as his future address, “China, D.V.” but he had added a large note of exclamation. Did he mean it as a query?

In 1913, Dr. Pain, of C.M.S. hospital, Old Cairo, suddenly died, and as Borden and I walked side-by-side in the sad funeral procession I whispered to him, “Are we also ready?” Some three weeks later Borden was himself carried to the Old Cairo cemetery. What a wonderful distributor he had been, carrying a hundred of my khutbas at a time, tied to the bars of his bicycle.

Some may wonder why I never published the life of Borden in Arabic. We did translate a part of it, but as he had died before reaching his field, the story is not of the East but of undergraduate life, of no special interest to Arabs. However, I worked myself at the Arabic translation of St. Clair Tisdall’s devotional

brochure and published it under the title of *An Alabaster Box of Very Precious Ointment*.

We had other links with the "Land of Sinim" and its ten millions or more of Moslems. A number of our pamphlets were got out in Arabic and English with the special object of facilitating their translation to Chinese; these were widely circulated by missionaries in Moslem areas. Ahungs (sheikhs) often used to write to Mr. Rhodes (C.I.M.) for him to send on to Sheikh Abdallah at N.M.P. Cairo, and most interesting was the slow correspondence thus developed with Moslems of China. In fact, as recently as June, 1936, I read a strong objection by Moslem propagandists to the story of Abdallah's conversion to Christ! Even the children at the Chefoo schools were in touch with us, and for several years sent their pocket "pennies" to help the work in Cairo, and many were the prayers offered for "Uncle Arthur" and for Sheikh Abdallah.

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COLPORTAGE work has always been a strong point with us. Of all departments of literary mission-work, this, the circulation of the literature, is the most difficult. Perhaps this is why some literature agencies do not attempt colportage!

The N.M.P. started colportage work from the very beginning, but for some years we just ran our own men. Then a proposal was made to us that the American U.P. Mission (the largest in Egypt), the Egypt General M. (second largest), and C.M.S. should all unite with N.M.P. for colportage work. (We have always kept before us the extreme desirability of co-operating with others likeminded.)

The new scheme was inaugurated at a special United Conference of Colporteurs held at Zeitoun, the hospitable headquarters of E.G.M., where many other conferences have been convened. The co-operative effort thus started still goes on, though shortness of funds, has, of recent years, limited the number of colporteurs. The extra travelling about the country to supervise and encourage the men greatly added to my work—some of my *Arabic Simplified* was written in railway trains between stops at the stations—but the interest and spiritual stimulus can hardly be over-estimated. Nor can one exaggerate the need.

On one journey I slept away from home 26 nights. These could be classified thus:

In English mission-houses	nil
American „	4 nights
Egyptian houses	22 „

The occasion for accepting so much hospitality was that, when visiting colporteurs, I was preaching in the local mission-churches night after night, and my supper, bed and breakfast were provided. During the daytime I would be out with the men in country districts. On return to my wife she remarked upon my cheeks being so much fuller; the explanation was, “Fresh air, hot sun, good fare and loving hospitality.” One might add, “And lack of office worry.”

Having started a small branch of the Post-office Christian Association with an Arabic monthly magazine called *El-Bareed el-Misry* (The Egyptian Mail) I managed to do a good bit to circulate it during the one minute the train stopped at each station, and

even collect another subscription after the train had begun to move out. Those were busy days.

On one journey I distributed to stations at which the express did *not* stop. Several thousands of an urgent reply to Moslem propoganda against the Deity of Christ were left on my hands through a misunderstanding. Time was precious, for all Egypt was talking about the attack upon us; certainly the pamphlet was too good to waste. I therefore took a number with me on the express to Upper Egypt. Feeling a sudden inspiration, I tied a string around three or four copies, addressed them to the stationmaster—always on duty on the platform as the express rushed through—and tossed them to him. Not so easy as it sounds, for the current of wind would carry them upwards at first, but as the wind subsided we could see men grabbing the tracts. Were they not something to read? And something for nothing! Finding this to be feasible, it was repeated at very many other stations. In about 24 hours all Upper Egypt had learned the contents of my reply, for however little Egyptians may themselves read, it is remarkable how much they understand when the booklet is read aloud to them.

Yes, those were busy, happy days.

CHAPTER IX

WAR! "Even then will I be confident" (Ps. 27: 3, R.V.).

IN 1914, strange as it may sound, I was for a week the guest of H.H. Princess Hohenlohe, who was then helping in the work of the German Mission at Assuan, on the border of the Sudan. An exceedingly happy week it was and the Christian fellowship was appreciated on both sides. I was enabled to cheer them by means of Bible-readings, addresses, etc., and between one and two hundred Egyptians came to my Arabic lecture upon Ghazzali's book, *The Rescuer from Error*—translated to English in *Blessed-be-Egypt*, 1915. On the other hand, the German missionaries cheered me greatly and I brought away with me a kind gift of £40 to finance a new publication in memory of Princess Hohenlohe. That is just our experience of German missionaries, kindly God-fearing people, far removed from the position of diplomats and military men. After that, "The Deluge"!

After Assuan, the great work before us was to move into our new premises (which contained, in all, including residential accommodation, 42 rooms). These imposing premises, having a frontage of 100 feet to Sharia El-Manakh, Cairo, were not only purchased but paid for before occupation. This was made possible by a fund raised in various lands, chiefly through Dr. Zwemer who interested three American ladies each

to give over £2,000 to this special object. The ladies were Mrs. McCormick, Mrs. Borden and Mrs. Shepard. Looking back, one lifts up one's heart to God even today to think of the signal deliverance by which we paid off every penny before the Great War commenced and before we took possession.

On removing the machinery to Sharia-El-Manakh, many improvements were introduced. New printing-works were built behind our main building for the very small sum of £500; these, being of cement bricks with ferro-concrete roof, would have cost much more if delayed till war began.

There was some delay over the installation of electric dynamos to drive the machines, these being only handed over by the engineer at the very end of July; it was Saturday noon and I had to pay the staff, pack up, and get to the station for the afternoon express to the coast for a little rest, leaving Mr. Gentles in charge.

At Tanta, halfway to Alexandria, newsboys sprang on the footboard of the train, shouting "AUSTRIAN ULTIMATUM TO SERVIA," soon varying it, for shortness, to "HARB" (War).

We were "In" (to our new premises); thank God we were IN! For years we had suffered the greatest of inconveniences but at last we were "on our own," with not a half day to spare. Many were interested to hear of our great deliverance and the fact that all was paid for before entry. Mrs. Albert Head wrote these lines for Miss Van Sommer to publish.

"Prayer gets things done;
Then drop Hope's anchor into the vast deep
Of God's unchanging willingness to bless,

And make the cable of your faith so strong
You cannot drift from His great faithfulness.

Prayer gets things done.

Prayer gets things done;
'The things that are impossible with men
Are possible with God.' He will draw nigh
To those for whom you pray in life's dark hours;
Hope's stars shine brightest in a moonless sky.

Prayer gets things done.

Prayer gets things done;
Do we believe prayer is the golden key
Which God Himself has given us to use
To enter His great treasurehouse of grace?
Oh, use the key. No good will He refuse!
Prayer gets things done."

TROOPS poured into Egypt before accommodation could be prepared for them. Officers, chaplains, troops alike lay upon the desert sand outside Cairo until camps could be erected. From the very first the N.M. Press came into its own, so to speak, and our newly-erected machines revolved as fast as the electric dynamo could work.

The first month was financially difficult, for a moratorium was proclaimed, consequently no outstanding money could be collected, yet on the other hand our workmen had to buy bread. God helped us through.

One of our earliest purity leaflets was Kitchener's *Advice to Troops*, of which thousands were distributed in the "red-lamp" quarter. In fact, I very often walked around those terrible streets praying God to save the British boys from the "sharks." Meanwhile, the E.G.M. compound at Zeitoun was overrun by evangelists, converts, Bible classes, etc. Great work was done for God during those awful war-days.

As to the use made of N.M.P. by chaplains and others, on one single evening we sent down to the huge camps at Kantara on the Canal no less than 500,000 tracts, leaflets, hymn books, pocket Gospels, portionettes, etc.

UNEXPECTED difficulties then occurred. Whilst trying to open the upper window of my office, I fell upon the stone floor; no bones were broken but the spinal nerve was benumbed. Though the accident might easily have been worse, it seemed to affect the general nervous system already strained by war-worry and other matters. By Easter, it was considered wise to send us to England to take furlough a year early. One's own desire was for either Lebanon or Algeria on account of the "Arabic atmosphere," a thing easily understood by those—and only those—who love this beautiful tongue. A happy compromise was made by visiting England, but, whilst there, laying down the plans for writing an Arabic grammar. That gave me something interesting to do, and so greatly helped me to make a rapid recovery.

ARABIC SIMPLIFIED is a 448 pp. manual of the accidence, syntax, etc. of the *written* language, bound up with a 36 pp. "Reader." Not all of this was written in England by any means, but the whole was mapped out and it was afterwards developed during odd moments. Some hundreds of students have benefited by this stiff course, the first one to complete the whole being Rev. L. Bevan Jones, B.D., now principal of a training school at Lahore. Among the students were Mather (Urumtsi, Gobi Desert) and Dr. King (Kansuh).

There were reasons for not using the name Upson at that time, so an Arabic name was adopted. What better one could be suggested than Abd-ul-Fady (Servant of the Redeemer)? On return to Cairo, extensive use was made of this Arabic name and at last the Head Postmaster requested me to officially register it, giving him copies of the signature. Since that time it has become better known than my original name.

Meanwhile difficulties continued to increase; among others, the price of paper soared so much that, before the war ended, we were paying ten times the ordinary price. We were very fortunate to get it at all, for on two occasions consignments were sunk by submarines.

One morning there was great excitement among our Arab staff when one of them brought me the first large green posters issued by the Shereef of Mecca—henceforth to be called King of El-Hedjaz—announcing the new Arab Revolt against the Turks. When we say that Lawrence “backed the wrong horse” (if we may use the expression) we mean that there was a stronger man farther across the Peninsula. Even Ibn Saoud, however, could not then have welded Arabia into one nation.

During those troublous times we managed to get a permit for Miss C. E. Padwick to join me and develop Children’s Literature already started by Miss Trotter.

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OPPOSITE the N.M.P. building a wide tract of ground, then unsold, was being rapidly furnished with stools, chairs, and the like. What could be happening? Presently we saw hundreds of Jews thronging in, and later we “snapped” the first great meeting of Zionists

enthusiastically acclaiming the "Balfour Declaration" guaranteeing a National Home to the Jews IN Palestine. The phrase "*In* Palestine" was diplomatically worded, possibly they read into it more than was intended. Anyway, we rejoiced with them.

"Half in hope, half in fear,
Stood Israel by San Remo's gate,
Thither summoned to appear
For decision of his fate.

Joy and gladness fills the earth.
Every heart thrills through and through:
Israel has received re-birth,
The *world* to itself proves true."

So Ben Samuel wrote in *The Zionist Review* for May, 1920. But for my part, I would re-write the last line thus:

"*God's Word* hath to itself proved true."

CHAPTER X

“Snatching them out of the Fire” (Jude 23, R.V.).

“BRANDS plucked out of the fire” (Zech. 3: 2). What imagery! What urgency! How the fire burned within me at the very thought of the thousands of troops and hundreds of officers that were being destroyed in the fires of Cairo and Alexandria. Twenty-five streets and lanes in our one city of Cairo were given over to the detestable traffic in girls and women. And still the area was continually being enlarged until much of what is commonly called the “European quarter” was involved. Near us, a single building of about 40 rooms, formerly a well-known hotel, was used by “Officers Only.” Further there had been almost a complete breakdown of efforts to make vice “safe” (?), and not a few of the bolder men, such as Anzacs, had taken matters into their own hands and several brothels had been burnt down in revenge for disease taken from the women. All this—and much more—in Cairo. What of Alexandria, a great seaport and therefore naturally worse?

Most of the responsible authorities had worked hard trying to stem the increasing list of casualties from this cause, for many were very greatly worried at the mounting percentage of V.D. cases. But, as we all know, in every team there are horses that “pull their weight” and others that just “drift along.” Rev. Guy Thornton was very shocked at the position of affairs and rushed into print, but his book was promptly

censored, and parts cut out—my copy showed curious blank spaces.

By 1916 the position had become so grave that a special commission sat to hear evidence from all sides. Some of the evidence in the official report was almost too heartrending to be credited. It seemed that that terrible war had found us all as unprepared on the moral plane as on the military one. One can hardly walk past those beautifully-kept cemeteries at Cairo, Jerusalem, and other places in the East without wondering how many were victims of Turkish bullets and how many of unmentionable diseases! But enough! Let us pass to direct narrative.

We had, as I mentioned, got out leaflets to warn the troops, and had printed many more for chaplains, Y.M.C.A., etc., while I had walked round and round the special "vice" areas crying to God to save our boys. Were those prayers unanswered? Never! But at first it seemed that the wave of evil was sweeping all before it, for the women invaded the most respectable quarters of Cairo, even Al-Manakh, next door to us. Just at that time a verse of Scripture haunted me by day and night; it was Jude 23, R.V., "Snatching them out of the fire." The thought ever in my mind was—How can I snatch them from the fire unless I go near enough to the fire to get scorched by it? But meanwhile we made fresh approaches to the Highest Authorities through Bishop MacInnes who strongly backed us. He afterwards reported to me how my strong statements were received, and really attended to, by General Allenby and others.

At last it seemed that I must venture into the fire and brave the scorching. (It *does* scorch.) I went into

the bad streets to attempt to buttonhole British soldiers, leaving with every one a four-page appeal at the least. These were *Gospel* purity leaflets pointing the way to victory in the Name of Jesus. Also Gospels, and the special edition of "Proverbs," were distributed. Needing a walk every Saturday evening, I took my recreation by filling one pocket with 200 English tracts and the other with 200 Arabic ones for Egyptians and Syrians. With these I went around the bad streets, after praying to God to keep me and any others who sometimes joined me. After over four years of such work, it appeared that I (with occasional help) had distributed round about 40,000 tracts to British troops and 40,000 Arabic ones to Egyptians, etc. The Arabic-speaking students were best reached on Thursday nights, and later on some four of our Egyptian helpers took over this branch from me altogether, they doing the Arabic distribution and I merely supervising from the other side of the road, or walking past. These "Faithful Four," as we called them, kept it up for *ten years* and distributed no less than 500,000 leaflets. After that time, funds dropped off—and half a million tracts cannot be printed without money—but it has recently rejoiced my heart to hear that the effort has been resumed.

How were funds raised in the first instance? My effort got very talked about among those interested and by that means we got names and addresses of social workers, Christian officers, and many others, to whom we sent out circulars telling of the progress of the campaign. It was a real hand-to-hand fight with the Devil. Week by week the area widened and some incredible things were heard. The matron of one hospital wrote to ask my help to try to stop "Sand-

bagging," a species of crime that I have never heard of in any other connection. On going into the matter, it appeared that soldiers—Anzacs, if possible, for they carried more money—were invited into certain brothels, taken up to balcony rooms, made drunk, and then violently struck in the centre of the spinal column by something hard enough to benumb the victim but without wounding him—originally a bag of sand was used—then the poor wretch would be pitched over the balcony into the street, and perhaps killed, or one or more limbs would be broken. Needless to say, the victim was always robbed of all he carried before he was thrown into the street. When picked up by the Military Police, there was every evidence of drunkenness and so it became easy to conclude that he "Fell over the balcony whilst drunk." Terrible! But we made urgent representations to the Authorities and the patrols of Military Police were strengthened and a better look-out was kept, and in time that particular form of crime seemed to come to an end.

ALEXANDRIA had one long shopping street leading to the tram terminus which was notorious for its "Pensions" supposed to be entirely for officers. Whilst down there for a change of air I personally investigated no less than 37 of these awful places and found them all to be "disorderly houses," for some had peepholes through which they spied on any caller and if I could not talk their "slang" promptly told me to be off, for this was a private residence; others opened the door an inch and when I got my foot in I could see the young officers with the poor painted creatures on their knees. In other cases the door would be opened to me,

but when I asked for the dining-room—on the hypothesis that dinner would soon be served—they would show me into a girl's room and laugh. When I reported these places to the G.O.C. Force in Egypt, he saw at once that I was not reporting what I had been *told*, but what I had *witnessed* at great personal discomfort. A peremptory order was issued and all the notice-boards (“pensions”) were torn down unless the places were immediately converted to boarding houses with permanent residents. This was all very hard, thankless work, and again and again one felt “scorched” by the fire from which one was trying to snatch others.

THE RESIGNATION of a chaplain was an unexpected development. One Godly minister of the Gospel came all the way from Kantara to Alexandria to see me. He told me that on being transferred from Salonika he was staggered to see on the same sheet of “Orders” two notices close together:—The first was a loving message from H.M. Queen Mary, closing with the words, “Keep the home fires burning.” Underneath was a notice to the effect that “No. 8 rue . . . is now IN BOUNDS to H.M. troops as a licensed brothel.” The juxtaposition of the two notices so shocked him that he felt he wanted to vomit—such had already been the effect upon others of us. He then resigned his commission and went home, reporting at once to his ecclesiastical superiors. All such incidents drew more and more attention to the effort being made to rescue the soldiers. The Bishop once told me that a high general said to him, “Do you know that if that man (myself) goes on with such work he will kill himself in time?” Then he leaned forward, and

said quite seriously and sympathetically, "Even so, it's worth it, and worth it all the time."

WHILST I was "at the foot of the cliff" picking up poor broken men, others were "putting up a fence at the top of the cliff," e.g., Y.M.C.A., Soldiers' Homes, etc., were lecturing at the "Base." Here is one instance of co-operation of the two ends.

A soldier who attended my meeting on the balcony of the Russell Soldiers' Home told us that seven years before he had become converted to God and had preached the Gospel. Then he got slack and fell into sin. In Cairo he went the way of "all the rest." (Not *all*, thank God.) Whilst in a house of ill-fame in a side street one evening he heard the Soldiers' Christian Association singing at our meeting. The words were:

" Sowing the seed of a lingering pain,
Sowing the seed of a maddened brain,
Sowing the seed of a tarnished name,
Sowing the seed of eternal shame:
Oh, *what* shall the harvest be?"

Shaking off the women, he ran across and up our stairs. Workers dealt with him but he said that the way of transgressors was hard. At the next meeting of the S.C.A. I was the speaker and dealt with that particular subject. He was present, and greatly impressed, and remorseful that he who had preached to others should have himself become a castaway. After the meeting he came into an inner room with me and we knelt in prayer. When he began to pray audibly how he struggled and how he prayed. He then passed me a scrap of paper on which he had pencilled the words:

“Brother, I have hit the track once again, for Christ has forgiven me my sin. Hallelujah.”

Other stories could be told of the digging out of an ex-Y.M.C.A. secretary, also of a public school boy. After a year or two, returning from Helwan Conference to attend to my correspondence, I sprang into a train as it was moving, and did not notice who was there. A man followed me to my seat and asked if I remembered him. When I asked him if he were now living an active Christian life, his face lit up, and he told me that he was running a Sunday-school to assist the chaplain.

PERHAPS the most thrilling memory of those thrilling days is that of Adjutant Krone. The Salvation Army had sent out their Col. Knott and as they had no place in which to meet we lent them a room and joined with them. Then a small work was started in Alexandria. Calling merely to encourage the two ladies—in the first instance—a way to get help from them presented itself. I invited them to come with me and sing to the men. Rather a startling proposition, but the Salvation Army does not frown upon new methods. As the Major was ill, her assistant accompanied me, after the usual prayer. Imagine this scene, as I described it at the time:

Going upstairs to the first floor landing of a large house, the women slammed their doors in our faces, but Miss K. began to sing on the stairs, and soon twenty soldiers from the flat above were hanging over the railings listening to the sweet voice singing to them. Imagine the men’s surprise as they heard this:

“What can wash away my stain?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make me pure again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”

Presently she changed to "Rock of Ages, cleft for me." But the men did not know how to keep their eyes off her face, radiant with the love of God, and with love for their souls. Even the women were listening at every peephole when I began to speak a few words. Then more sweet Gospel singing, at which the soldiers—to relieve their emotions—broke out into loud cheers. Silencing them I offered prayer, and as they passed out, for most of them left, each man reached out his hand and accepted one of our tracts. To God be the Glory. As I type these words, the remembrance of it all, even after years, stirs the emotions almost to tears. Nobody will ever persuade me that we did not do work for Eternity.

BISHOP Taylor Smith, the Chaplain-General, came out to do inspection routine, and also to "see for himself." He accompanied me to the most repulsive places, shirking nothing. Never shall I forget the sight of the Bishop—in mufti, of course—holding forth the message of Life amidst the filth and stench with his arm upon the neck of a sinning boy. Flesh and blood could hardly stand it, and more than once I touched him to "Come away." After a long time, he could stand no more, so just said one word, "Home." I took him back to Bishop Gwynne's house. But with what power did he speak at the massed parade next morning, upon the subject of Samson and Delilah!

For a year or more I was kept busy in my spare time giving Arabic lectures to Egyptians up and down the country in connection with the newly-formed Alliance of Honour. Many hundreds of N.M. Press purity books were distributed, for we had specialised in this subject.

CAMEOS. A few thumbnail sketches showing various sides of this work, lest the seriousness of the subject be too much for the reader, and thus defeat its own ends.

1. "Ere, gov'nor, 'ere's a bob fer yer trubble," shouted a poor ignorant cockney soldier whom I had just rescued and was assisting on to the tram to go back to barracks. Not understanding why I could not hear him, he kept the tram waiting while he shouted again, and finally tried to write it, finding spelling a bit difficult! To relieve the conductor of the tram, I accepted his "bob" and put it in our war-chest, to pay for more tracts.

2. Imagine the worker "seeing stars" for the first time in his life! A mighty blow on the jaw nearly knocked me out. But from whence? From the poor women whose trade I was taking away? Or from the murderous cut-throats who lived on their earnings? Neither. That blow came from an Anzac soldier that I was trying to rescue!

3. A poor diseased girl—Syrian or Egyptian—living in an unlighted, unpaved lane, was observed to be striking match after match. Turning, I said to her, "Why all this waste of matches?" "Look! look!" she cried, and lighted some more. At last I understood what she was doing. That poor fallen creature, whose trade I was taking away, was trying to communicate with the deaf man to save me from falling down a newly-dug cesspool, on the very verge of which I was standing in the dark. Why did she save me? Perhaps because

" Down in the human heart
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried
That Grace can restore."

4. Imagine my feelings when sent for by "G.O.C. Forces in Egypt" to interview him at the command of General Allenby then at the Palestine front. But General Sir Harry Watson, as he is now, was very helpful and appreciative. He, of course, pointed out the difficulty of carrying out all my suggestions, but did what he could. On one occasion he sent a high officer, to represent himself, to accompany me and study actual conditions. As for Lord Allenby, I never interviewed him, but had considerable correspondence with him. How did I address him? Having a son at school and in the O.T.C., and fearing that he would ultimately join up if the War lasted long enough, and knowing that Lord Allenby was a father also—his only son having been killed at Passchendaele—I wrote, as a father, willing to give his son to die honourably, but not willing to have him die of disease, dishonourably. Possibly the argument touched him; anyway he allowed me to write quite freely. On one occasion when I sent him twelve sheets, he replied saying, "I have instructed Generals A, B, and C, along the lines you mention."

IS anything going on still? Thank God, yes. For one thing the number of streets "In bounds" was greatly reduced. Also our helpers are still distributing as funds permit. Finally, Sister Katherine Ashe, with the fullest approval of Bishop Gwynne and others, has opened a Rescue Home in Cairo, at 5 Bustan el-Khashab, Qasr-el-Aini, to endeavour to rescue the poor creatures she has given her life to work among. This is the most nobly sacrificing work I know of, and worthy of the support of all Christian people.

CHAPTER XI

3,000 casualties. "My peace I give unto you."

YAHYA-'L-'ISTIQLÂL, shouted the mob (Long Live Independence) and have continued to shout it from the end of 1918, though at first it did not reach the ears of those in responsible positions. Later, they knew all about it, to their cost. Let us hope that the problem of Anglo-Egyptian relations will soon find solution; but in that event, whatever will there be left to talk about?

Christian workers of all nationalities are practically agreed that Egyptians, *at present*, make poor rulers; they also agree that it would be only fair to give them a chance to do better. They are quick enough in the "uptake." True, the Egyptian army would be a poor broken reed to lean upon for the defence and protection of Europeans *at present*. But why has it been allowed to get so weak?

Again, many thousands of Egyptians worked with the Allied Forces during the War, and not unnaturally expected that they would share either losses or gains. They saw that Suffragettes and others served when needed and bided their time, then got their demands granted; why not the descendants of the Pharaohs? Thus their reasoning.

One illustration taken from a date as early as 1917 to show their feelings. It had been greatly laid upon my heart to take a trip right along Bahr Yusef (Joseph's

relief canal, or river) which with all its bends maintains a course generally parallel to the Nile. Evangelists had often gone *across*, i.e., to specified towns and villages, but my idea was to go from one end to the other taking in turn every village on or near the banks. The American Mission took up the matter heartily and sent a houseboat and a missionary, while I contributed a colporteur, literature, and myself. A couple of score of very primitive villages were visited in the month I was able to stay on board, and services were held in most out-of-the-way places. At one village the headman was unusually gruff, and showed hardly any of the charming Oriental hospitality. We wondered what could have happened to ruffle him. The reason was soon given by the man himself. He had been obliged, that very day, to provide a large number of camels for the Labour Corps. Further he was annoyed over "Our Day" (the annual Navy day) the success of which had so amazed Sir R. Wingate and many others who did not know how it worked out. Local Egyptian officials had been applying a sort of social thumbscrew (social pressure) to extort money from the people. Our host described the process to us. The headmen of a score of villages would be gathered together at the district office; a fairly poor and unknown one would be called forward and informed that his own "voluntary" contribution was fixed at £50 for that year. Of course he raved, "God curse your father: I have not got fifty *pence*." But as all were quite used to Egyptians swearing they possess no money, nobody would be specially interested. In any case, this man being possibly illiterate may not have known just how much power the officials had to take money from him.

Next man. "Is your family lower in rank than the last man's?" "My family, sir, is infinitely *higher*." "Very well, you have to donate more; £60 for you." And so on.

Our host told us that these headmen really understood that King George was poor and the navy could not be paid without "Our Day." He showed me his own receipt for £35, the first half of his "donation"; the second half he would have to pay as soon as all the village knew that he had sold his cotton. With a kind of stolid patience, he and hundreds paid up their annual "donations," looking forward to the time when the English having beaten the Turks by the aid of the Egyptians would "share out the gains."

I am far from saying that the really High Authorities did these things, but they were busy with many matters whilst their subordinates did them; thus the stage was rapidly set for a great day of "Settling-up." Also, of course, even from fellaheen villages, hundreds of Egyptians (sometimes even 3,000 a year) had been studying in British colleges, often specialising in Political Economy, which on their return deteriorated into mere street oratory.

The day I settled in Egypt, if people said *kalaam Inglizy* (English talk) it meant "the real truth." The day I left, 33 years later, they were using the same phrase but with an exactly opposite meaning, for now it meant to them "all lies." These things make us seriously to think.

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THREE thousand casualties, of which 1,000 were killed. Such was the result of the Egyptian rising. We who have, for so many years, been reading the

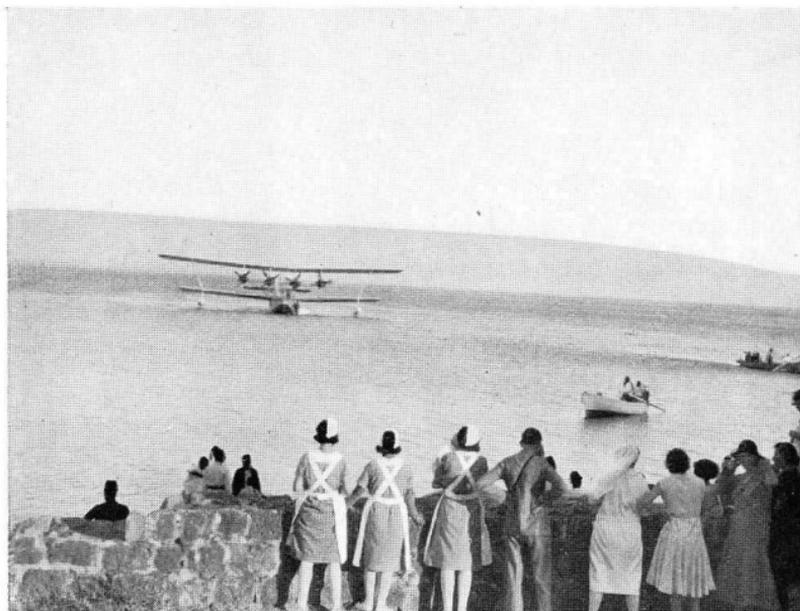
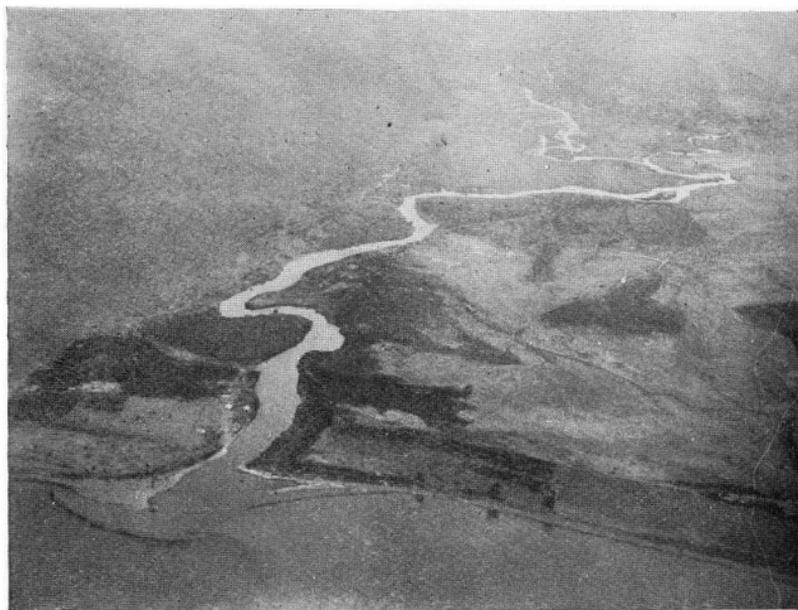


Photo: Dr. Torrance

SCOTTISH HOSPITAL NURSES WATCHING FIRST FLYING BOAT
ON SEA OF GALILEE



RIVER JORDAN ENTERING LAKE

Photo by Dr. Torrance, at 2,000 ft., 100 m.p.h.!

[Facing page 80

thoughts of the people do not wonder at their aspirations. The military occupation of *their capital* was, and is, one of their sorest points. (Why not move the troops down to the Canal?)¹

When the storm broke, plans were made for conveying Europeans to Gezireh, the island in the Nile opposite Cairo. That was never found necessary, I am glad to say, for it would have separated us from *Christian* Egyptians. There was, however, daily fear of a massacre of Armenians. The Copts had safeguarded themselves—as they thought—by joining the Moslems in their attacks upon the British.

As Assuan is nearly 600 miles south of Cairo, and the inhabited strip only from five to eight miles wide, the safeguarding of communications proved an almost impossible task.

So far as we were concerned, our first care was for converts, and secondly the colporteurs, almost all of whom were cut off. After that, for our staff of workmen and office-helpers. One well-known convert, with wife and children, arrived at our mission-house on a native truck covered with bedding, etc., while his brother-in-law came on another. The two families made themselves at home with us and were most grateful. This was made possible by flying the Union Jack over our building; but we could not have done that had we not *owned* the premises. Thank God for them.

By degrees we got into touch with our colporteurs, though the railway was cut in a dozen places. Their wants were relieved by various means, in some cases

¹ Written the first day of July. The proposals were published six days later.

by local Protestant pastors. But Bulos, of Luxor, 450 miles away, could not get word to me for over a month, all communications being cut. At last he got someone to telegraph southwards to Sudan, thence the message was re-telegraphed from Khartoum to Port Sudan, then it was cabled up the Red Sea to Suez, finally by the land wire (still working) to Cairo. After this 4,000 miles journey how much information did the message contain as to Bulos' welfare, poverty, etc.? Nothing whatever: the only words in it were—"UPSON, CAIRO, HOW'S YOUR HEALTH?"

As to our workmen, there were then about 210 printing-presses in Cairo, of which ours was the only English one. Of these, 209 went out on strike, and ours was the only one that did NOT. The men got a wee bit restive once and had to be handled. So I got out a statement of "Our Three Principles," printed it on a large poster and affixed it to our front gate. (The comments, here in brackets, were in smaller type.)

- I. The labourer is worthy of his hire. (But he has to *work* for it.)
- II. All ye are brethren. (But only if "One" is our Master. Even then, younger brethren take advice from elder brethren.)
- III. God is not the author of confusion, i.e. lawlessness. (Workers loyal to us will be protected and shall not be touched by anyone.)

Meanwhile we had to act as well as talk, so I myself stood under a tree opposite to our premises, spying on possible spies (pickets).

God brought us through without personal injury. Not even my slum work was interrupted except for a night or two. True, the Authorities issued a notice

that no Englishman was allowed to enter the native lanes unless armed with a loaded revolver. But I felt it right to continue penetrating the filthiest and wickedest of "bad streets," say a quarter mile or more from a main street (unarmed, of course), for was I not obeying "Orders," the orders of my superior, Who had sent me there to "snatch them out of the fire?"

During these troubles, I was glad to volunteer to help to save bloodshed by *accurately* interpreting the statements of the rebels, etc. This was during the Riots, and the work was done in the "Interrogation Officer's Office"; it was not during the War. Some of our friends in England got hold of this incorrectly, and I have had to correct it.

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SAID the one who is now H.E. Makram Pasha Obeid, one of the most brilliant members of the 1936 Egyptian cabinet, referring to his country's aspirations:

"Dreams are they? Yet ye cannot stay them,
Nor hold the dawn back for one hour.
Truth, Love and Mercy—though ye slay them—
Return with more than earthly power."

CHAPTER XII

“I will guide thee”—Further instances of The Urge—Testing our work—“Let the books speak, Lord.”

As remarked earlier, we are trying to trace God's hand in the guidance received from time to time. Here are two more instances.

In 1920—our furlough year—I felt, early in February, a very insistent call to the bedside of my father, for he was seriously ill in Essex, and I was his only child. Our Annual Report had to be written, but the official year would not close until 31st March. What could be done? Praying for guidance, I was shown how we could get off before the usual time. The Annual Report was then written upon the first ten months, and a little added before sailing to make it eleven, and finally taken with me to England to complete the twelfth month so soon as it expired.

But, how to get a passage to England? Such things were not, normally, obtainable just then. Again we prayed. Cooks' could hold out no hope. Meanwhile my father was growing worse, and my mother was getting worried. The last day of February we started for Port Said with no idea how to get across, except that we were sure God would open some door. We reached the port late at night and were very tired. Next morning, before doing anything else, we went out to look at the Front, and saw a small boat bringing

two passengers who were needing money from Cooks'. They told us that they had come, in haste, from a "prize vessel" anchored far out, and this seemed to be God's solution. We had to take a boat, throw in our luggage, and dash for the "one chance." Fortunately, the captain was willing to squeeze us in somewhere, on payment of the usual fare. Certainly this was God's solution. Yet our faith was tested en route. A severe epidemic of influenza devastated the holds, stokehole, etc., for the crew were mostly Indians of no great stamina. No less than 17 stokers (out of 24) actually died, and we put into Malta (in quarantine) to bury our dead. The speed of the ship was then greatly reduced for lack of stokers.

Next, came the March storms. We were tossed up and down, and took about 21 days to get from Port Said to Hull. At times the doors of the deck dining-room (a temporary erection) could not be opened. One wall cracked. However, at last we reached safety in the Humber. Now, after some years, were we justified in travelling at such a stormy season, and under such conditions? Yes, undoubtedly it was God's plan for us, for it had been locally thought that my father would not recover. (Though he recovered, he never worked again.) We knew we had done right, and therefore we *never looked back*. May I pass that on to young Christians?

ANOTHER instance of guidance. For a long time I had been feeling that we badly needed an original author, rather than a translator, who should be sound and yet a capable literary helper. The man laid upon my heart was Pastor Ibrahim Sa'eed. Whilst Mr. J. L. Oliver, secretary of our N.M. Press Committee,

was visiting the field of colportage work in Upper Egypt, we were entertained to a sumptuous supper. But the ladies had been to church to hear me preach, and so the turkey was only half-cooked, and there would be an hour to wait. What were the guests to do? We chatted on various topics. At last, I wrote on a slip of paper, "Write!" and passed it to Pastor Ibrahim, who was at table with us. He perfectly understood my meaning, but replied, "Yes, if God wills." But the Arabic for "If God will" is indefinite, and may mean "I hope so." After another 20 minutes—whilst still waiting for the turkey—I passed another note saying that God was calling him to write the Gospel, and he left it to me to choose subjects for him. Again, the third time, I wrote him and suggested a subject, telling him that God was speaking to me and pointing him out to me as His choice. Ibrahim accepted and agreed to write in his spare time. At last the turkey appeared, and we ran to catch our train. We had plenty of indigestion that night, but we had the satisfaction of having secured a really first-class helper.

Years passed, and the Pastor became part-time Professor of Hebrew at the American Missionary Theological Seminary and one of our best writers, for we took him on to the staff for part-time. One of his most helpful books is his Commentary on St. Luke, about 600 pages, for the people greatly prefer fat books, as they also like long sermons! Though priced at six shillings, that book sold "like hot cakes."

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DURING this period, Miss Van Sommer had herself been staying with the Shelleys at Jerusalem and

supervising the opening of our mission bookshop. She reported as follows: "We found a place, signed the contract and took possession on Armistice Day whilst the Armistice was being signed." (That book depot is carrying on to-day as well as ever, and in spite of the "Arab Rebellion" it has not yet had to close for a day.) The first superintendent of our Palestine colporteurs was Rev. Archibald Forder, but after three years' work, he retired in 1924, a wreck, having suffered severely at the hands of the Turks during the War.

Towards the end of 1923, having been requested to combine all departments into one administration—printing, publishing, colportage, overseas distribution—and to be Director of the whole, I went to Hampstead Heath for quiet prayer to obtain Divine guidance. Whilst there, an acorn fell at my feet; I picked it up and kept it for years. To me, just then, it preached two sermons in one: 1. The cup holds the acorn from beneath: "Underneath are the Everlasting Arms." 2. The cup fits the acorn like a glove; so Divine providence fits my needs. I returned to Cairo and accepted the extra responsibilities. A period of great extension began, and "the acorn fitted the cup."

The finest book of this period is my great book of 470 pages on the Deity of Christ, called *The Lord of Glory*. Three of us each wrote part, then I edited all, drastically curtailing. Canon Baz of Jerusalem and others had urged me to produce it.

LATER on, I wrote out some simple tests by which to tell whether each tract I was then circulating was of gold, silver, alloy, or of baser metal:

1. Has it been prayed over? Even the greatest controversialists of the East such as Pfander and Tisdall have been men of prayer.

2. Has it a definite objective? Even if non-controversial, what is the object you are aiming at? If that is not clear to you, could you re-write the tract to make it clearer?

3. Does it *speak*? . . . A touching story is told of an old chief in the New Hebrides who was watching John G. Paton at work on the New Testament of the Aniwan language. "Does it speak?" said the old man. "Yes, it can talk now in your own language." "Let it speak to me!" Paton read a few lines. "It does speak; oh, give it to me; make it speak to me again!" Is not our first work to make our books *speak*? My little verse sums up our fervent desire:

Make the books speak, Lord,
Make the books speak!
Give us an open ear,
Let us their message hear
Calling to far and near,—
Make the books speak!

Let my pen speak, Lord,
Let my pen speak!
Keep it controlled by Thee,
Never disloyal to Thee,
Ever on fire for Thee,—
Let my pen speak!

Open men's hearts, Lord,
Open men's hearts!
Give us a blessed shower
Of Holy Spirit power
That we may speak this hour
Straight to men's hearts.

CHAPTER XIII

The greatest Irrigation Engineer tells of his conversion from Modernism.

IN 1924 we were seriously tested by the loss of a worker and by the non-arrival of some expected ones. It has cost us more than one worker to stand for "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3, R.V.), yet, even so, we have never published anything to be burnt up at the Judgment (1 Cor. 3: 13, 15). One specially qualified and sound candidate was three times turned down by the doctors that summer. Also, Fairhaven, the missionaries' home at the coast, was being altered and therefore could not take us in: so, as we could not afford hotels, we accepted the loan of a house at Ma'adi, south of Cairo; this, however, necessitated hot journeys to and from the office, morning and afternoon. I remember marking special passages in my Bible during one specially bad week—our "Black Week"—we called it—e.g. 1 Kings 17:14, which meant to me that we should be enabled to hold out until reinforcements came.

The light suddenly broke in upon me and I saw that "God's Man" to help me over the temporary crisis was not a missionary but a great engineer. (G. B. Michell, Esq., H.M. Consul-General at Milan also came with his wife to help us.)

Sir W. Willcocks' friends have lately published his autobiography. It is called *Sixty Years in the East* and

can be borrowed from circulating libraries. This extremely interesting book stops short of his famous law-case which for a whole year was the topic of Egypt. He had made certain attempts to help the Egyptians—perhaps unadvisedly, see Ps. 106: 33—but he had failed. God blessed him in his trials and used the life of Sadhu Sundar Singh to a remarkable conversion. Willcocks had previously published a pamphlet upon the Flood, expressing Modernist views. Now he took a sharp right turn. And when a worker left me, he wrote a truly remarkable account of his change of faith. It will be found a few pages lower.

But *who* was this man?

Born in India in 1852, Willcocks joined the Indian Public Works service, his branch being Irrigation of United Provinces. Then in 1883 he came to Egypt and did similar works there. His greatest achievement was designing the huge Assuan dam, one of the finest material blessings Egypt ever had; for that he got less than his meed of reward. Next, he became famous in Mesopotamia—his great schemes being duly accepted by the Turk and then—pigeonholed. They were never carried out. After his great case, he remained in Egypt and in his old age but new faith gave his abilities, his strength and his remaining money, to translate the N.T. to Egyptian Colloquial.

We printed for him—over some seven years or so—about 400,000 volumes, all of which he disposed of by himself *freely*, i.e. either by grants to stations or by personal distribution in the streets and at Old Cairo hospital. When I left Cairo early in 1931 he was still as busy as ever, printing and distributing.

Anecdotes of Willcocks. A few out of many.

1. *Al-Siyāsa*, the Liberal daily paper, had been inserting a long series of semi-humorous character-sketches of eminent Egyptians: one day it surprised everyone by giving a front page to Willy Cockis, as the fellaheen called him. A clever caricature showed him as a clergyman dressed in black complete with clerical collar, and underneath was this: "Behold the greatest irrigation engineer, who used to make gardens for us, and now points us to the 'Garden' of the better world." (Paradise, in Moslem language, is El-Janna, The Garden.) Not a bad summing-up.

2. In the same whole-page article were many stories, one of which told of Willcocks agreeing for a salary of £1,500 pounds from the Egyptian Government, the actual word "*Egyptian* pounds" not having been mentioned, but always understood, as it is the current coin. (The £E is £1 os. 6d.). When paid he returned the cheque; as he had anticipated Sterling, not Egyptian, he refused the sixpences. To us in England, that may sound a natural thing to do, but the Egyptians wrote: "Just fancy; here is a man always 'out on the make' but never for himself, always for the other man."

3. Again. This well-informed writer added: "During a score of years past I have very often seen Sir William having a 'bit of a fight' and sometimes it has been 'agin the Govt.' like a good Irishman, but never have I found him fighting for gain for *himself*—always for some cherished principle, or for some poor man!" Then the writer wound up by asking, "How do you account for an Englishman—of all men—living a self-

denying life like that?" Being a Moslem, and perhaps not a very religious one, the writer disregarded all Sir William's religious principles, and gave this remarkable explanation: "Well, you see, even though Willcocks was an Englishman yet he was born in India and so was almost one of us, that accounts for it."

4. A story of mine. Having got to be very helpful to us, especially in acting as a "prayer-partner" for me, Sir William graciously allowed us to photograph him with our staff. Next day, when he saw our picture he grumbled, saying, "You have me look an old man of 90, I am only a young man yet, only 72." Later, he brought me a postcard photo of himself alone, and tossed me a few copies, saying, "There you are. I've had to go and have this taken specially for you." Lady Willcocks borrowed it from my secretary, and I believe this is the one Blackwoods used after his death. That by the way.

The story is a good one. One early August day, he brought me a cheque for £100 and laughingly chatted about it. Said he: "They asked me to write a paper for a summer gathering at Cambridge upon the relation between increased canal-irrigation and increased malaria. I sent the paper. Then they asked me to come and read it. I refused, as I was not needing to get out of Cairo—it is only August, and I was born in India—and, further, I did not wish to spend the money."

"Then, whence this £100?"

"I remembered that a man owed me that, and I prayed and told God that I could not book the passage later than July."

"So you prayed for the £100 to come by 31st July?"

“Never! What I asked was that it might be paid to me a day or so *too late*. So that I might not have to go, but could have that balance in hand to pay you for printing more Gospels. Now then, cancel that last order, and make out a new one, doubling the number. Then any balance to go to my credit for still more.”

“I CAME NOT TO DESTROY BUT TO FULFIL.”

A personal testimony by Sir William Willcocks, K.C.M.G.

“About thirty-five years ago I was greatly attracted by Modernism (as it is called to-day) and studied it more and more as the years went on, but in September, 1921, I purchased a copy of *The Sadhu* by Streeter, in which the Sadhu describes Modernism as a form of religious influenza, and I began to reconsider the question. I was greatly struck by a saying of the Sadhu that in India there are only two real converting agencies, the Holy Scriptures and the godly lives of professing Christians. I began a close study of the Gospels, and determined to translate them into Egyptian in the interests of the fellaheen who cannot understand the literary language of the school into which the Bible has been translated. At the same time . . . I worked for two and a half hours daily in the C.M.S. Hospital in Old Cairo practising healing in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. . . .

To enable me to have the necessary faith to speak to the patients with assurance, in the name of Christ, I had to live in the bracing part of the Bible and leave off burying myself in the contentious parts, the greater part of which had a quite new meaning thrown into it by the contemplation of Jesus Christ as a great faith

healer using material such as I had before me. It was this practical forgetting of all the good and bracing parts of the Bible and eternally living in the contentious atmosphere of the critics among the contentious parts, which had made the past thirty-two years of my life so barren and sterile. As a modernist, my motto had been "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit," while I had spent my time discovering daily new evidences of the incompetence and duplicity of those whom the Holy Spirit had inspired to write the Scriptures! !

Just when the Scriptures had again become to me the "Sword of the Spirit," I had put into my hand Professor R. D. Wilson's *Are the Higher Critics Scholarly?* This settled me. I read the book four times and then wrote and asked in the correspondence columns of the *Guardian* if any of the higher critics have replied to Dr. Wilson's scathing questions, but I never got an answer. His questions cannot be answered.

During my studies of Bible facts in the valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates, I had often proved the accord of the Bible accounts with observations by level and compass, with observations of the behaviours of the rivers, with the ideas of the time and with the mode of expression of the time in the spoken language, but I had always been up against the dead wall of the higher critics and their dictum on the score of language. But now that the greatest Bible scholar has justified the Old Testament, just on the score of language, *I have returned to my old faith in the Word of God, and literally live in it.*

Our fathers gave up all belief in the infallibility of the Church, but believed in the infallibility of the Word

of God; and in this faith we Protestants went on conquering and to conquer. Modernism now wants to take away our belief in the infallibility of the Word of God, and protests against our Protestantism, leaving us nothing to lean on. It is such unprofitable business, and I often think to myself that if these destructive critics were to obey Christ's command and make a serious attempt to imitate Him in His great healing work, they would, to a man, return to their old healthy faith in the Bible, and do some really constructive work for their Saviour."

W. WILLCOCKS

Cairo 12-9-24.

CHAPTER XIV

A Thirsty Land (Algeria, Sahara, etc.)—Promoted to Glory—Attempted Murder of two of our Staff in Transjordan.

MISS LILIAS TROTTER—friend of John Ruskin—had, with her colleague, spent months in Cairo early in 1915, starting our children's department. Everything she saw there appealed to her so much that she made several attempts to get back to us but her own mission (Algiers Mission Band) claimed her and she was one who could wait for God's own time to come.

In 1924 Miss Trotter attended the Jerusalem Conference and, in April, gave us a brief couple of days on her way to Glasgow. As her bedroom was close to mine, the fanlight over the door threw strong electric light into mine and awakened me from 2 to 4 a.m. She afterwards explained her habit of spending the sleepless hours (2—4) in intercession for each of her workers.

1925 saw me on the way to England for a brief two months' visit, the ordinary furlough being postponed until new workers should have been sent out. Every effort was made to get passages on a ship that would call at Algiers for a "stop-over" visit at Miss Trotter's special request. Much prayer was offered about this, but it proved to be impossible. That being so, my Committee asked me to endeavour to make a special trip to Algiers in the fall of the year, as Miss Trotter



CHAIRMAN OF NAZARETH CONFERENCE (see Ch. 18)
My hand on the Pastor's shoulder; Dr. Bathgate on my left

was then drafting great suggestions for co-operation in literature distribution.

In October, I obtained a passage to Algiers with no trouble whatever and found the A.M. Band workers gathered for the Annual Rally. To quote Miss Trotter's own words:

"The Spring brought a fellow-worker (Theobald) a conviction that his call was to a systematic itineration in the great unreached districts of the land. . . . Within a few weeks came a letter from Mr. Upson offering to put in a fortnight on his way to England. Our joy was great, and so was our disappointment when the passage proved unobtainable. But all would have been frustrated, as we now see, if that first plan had been realised. . . .

This time, by some heavenly clockwork, he came to the very day in time for our rally. . . . They all fell into harmony, that was of God . . . and very soon He gently drew, as is His wont, the thread of His purpose out of the tangle of our immature thoughts, and gave it into Mr. Upson's hands as the clue to follow."

But Miss Trotter herself was confined to her room; at first for the period of three weeks, then for three months, and finally, on-and-off for three years. Yet there, in bed, she did her finest work, including that *beautiful* book, *The Sevenfold Secret*, which I put into Arabic.

The outcome of my visit was that the N.M. Press Committee cordially accepted my suggestions to co-operate with the A. M. Band by starting colportage work in Algeria. That work has gone on ever since. Two years later we were able to call again on our way to England for another "flying visit." Whilst in England it was a joy to speak at the breakfast of C.I.C.C.U. (the Evangelical Students' Union at Cambridge), one

member of which, J. R. Menzies, came out to join us in 1927. (Miss Mollison had preceded him but for secretarial work; George Wald accompanied him for colportage work; J. E. Kinnear came from New Zealand at the end of 1928. Thus God answered our prayers for selected workers.)

In May, 1927, on my way to Egypt, I visited parts of the N.A.M. work in Morocco and also parts of the South M. Mission. Then, at a still later period, it became possible to go again to Algiers and to stay longer in order to plan with Theobald for a special car, the money for which had been sent to us. This car has an arrangement at the back for opening out a bookstall, and has been greatly used on long journeys to the Southlands. Pastor Stalley kindly photographed it for us whilst out with his own son using it. See our *Frontispiece*.

In February, 1928, Miss Trotter suggested that Figuig, an oasis at the south-east corner of Morocco, would be a good centre from which to study plans for taking the Gospel into the great Sahara. Accordingly Theobald and I went there and found much to encourage. The prospects have not, however, yet been realised—partly owing to lack of experienced staff. Returning to Algiers—having been telegraphed for, to go to Transjordan—we told our dear Miss Trotter of all our plans, although we dreaded the effect upon her increasingly weak condition. Next morning she said that her sleepless night had been “one long beautiful dream or vision of the yet-to-be.”

As I left for my ship early next morning, there was only time to say, “Good-bye, Beloved, until the day break and the shadows flee away.” That summer she

passed to the Fuller Life, "not somehow, but triumphantly."

GAIRDNER passed to the Fuller Life about the same time. I had been present at the very last service he conducted in his Cairo church, and observed his terrible struggle to speak at all. Then, for two or three months, he lay dying at Heluan: yet he found strength to write me a long six-sheet epistle outlining and proposing plans for his long-cherished project,—no less than a new Arabic translation of the New Testament. A quotation may be given, omitting the more personal references to myself:

"The race of super-Arabist missionaries in Syria has passed away and left no successor, except perhaps George Ford, an old man now. . . . Is it not treason tamely to let our lives and our generation slip away without having yielded our contribution to a task like this? . . . I will sketch you my idea of the 'company.' It would consist of an inner circle and an outer circle. The inner circle would be A.T.U.—W.H.T.G.—Adams—Asaad Dagher—Ibrahim Sa'eed. . . . With your deafness your most effective work would be to have each chapter of the draft referred to you immediately it is drafted—also to Ibrahim Sa'eed—for suggestions and criticisms. . . ." Later on, he said, "We should need co-operators too in the Home-land—I don't mean so much Arabists (for 'museum-Arabists' are simply hopeless on a job like this). . . ."

He closed his letter characteristically, "Ever yours, as from 1899 . . . until . . . ah, that's the point. No gambling. 'NOW' is emphatically the day of salvation. W.H.T.G."

A few months later he was ushered into the presence of the King. And of the names he mentioned, approvingly, two others are dead and one retired.

Alas! he was probably correct in his surmise that "the race of super-Arabists is fast passing away." For in 1850 there was concentration upon one thing at a time; in 1936 there is dissipation of energy.

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DURING the Jerusalem Conference, while Gairdner lay dying of pleurisy, there was a serious attempt at murdering two of our staff!

The regional conference of an earlier date had dealt with *Moslems* as such. But 1928 was planned to be a world-wide conference, only mentioning them incidentally. An initial error was the location of the conference in a city which has always been just "smoking ashes" needing only one spark. The second error of judgment was in calling together the Moslem editors—though that might have been a wise step in *some* lands—and handing them copies of the Findings passed in 1924 about work among *Moslems*. They flew into a rage, translated and published those findings of the earlier conference, and then sounded a loud battle-cry, "Out with the missionaries." Thus a violent storm broke over our heads not merely before the conference ended but before it began.

The people of Transjordan worked themselves into a fury and the Authorities were unprepared for their ravings. Whilst I was travelling in the Sahara, South of Algeria, George Wald had taken Khalil our colporteur over Jordan with him in spite of it being the fanatical month of Ramadhan. (The conference, also, was being

held in the worst month that could have been chosen!) Wald and Khalil were furiously assaulted, men armed with heavy cudgels jumping upon the motor-car to "brain" them. George got off with several contusions and a month's rest, but poor Khalil—already subject to epileptic fits—suffered more; then, one day, a fit came on whilst he was washing his feet at a pool of water, and he fell into the water and was drowned. I came back from Algeria in haste and went over the Jordan interviewing police, etc., but nobody was punished, for the police said that the villains had not been found.

The Jerusalem Conference, then sitting, passed no expression of sympathy that I ever heard of. Is it justifiable to quote Acts 18: 17?

For months it was touch-and-go, and missionaries were all but driven out of Palestine. Possibly the attacks upon the Jews the next summer, 1929, diverted attention from one victim to another.

CHAPTER XV

“He maketh His ministers a flame of fire.”—Our Silver Jubilee.

PAPER is inflammable and insurance companies charge a good premium to insure it against fire. In Bacon's Essays books are classified in different classes,—books to be nibbled at, books to be swallowed and books to be really digested. Had Bacon lived in this our day, he might have divided them into “Books *on* fire,—Books *for* the fire.” See 1 Cor. 3: 15. Books ON FIRE. Think of it. Books that burn or sting. Mr. Hugh Redwood spoke to us missionaries at Keswick this year and incidentally mentioned his difficulty in getting a live, redhot message transferred to cold type. *Well* we know his difficulty, after so many years of grappling with it ourselves. By God's Grace it can be made possible for books to be on fire. That was our early objective, “Who maketh His ministers (messages) a flame of fire.” But have we attained our objective? Let others give their thoughts, in this account of

OUR SEMI-JUBILEE

On 12th March, 1930, a large oriental pavilion covered the whole space of our courtyard and was completely filled. Alexan Pasha, President of the Egyptian Evangelical Church of 22,000 communicants, was chairman. We (the staff) were at once encouraged and

humbled when we heard read out the messages from many lands and scores of societies, including German, English, American, Danish, Swedish, Irish, Scottish, Egyptian and Syrian workers. It is impossible to give one-tenth of the tributes, and some were too personal. However, let us quote one sentence from each of four.

From Bishop Gwynne :

“My heartiest good wishes and congratulations to N.M.P. on attaining its 25th birthday. The movement was begun, and has been continued, and please God will be used mightily for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ among Moslems everywhere. Above all, I send my greetings and affectionate regards to the gallant leader in this great enterprise for God. . . .”

From Bishop MacInnes, Jerusalem :

“I am able to look back to the beginning of the Press work and realise how great a debt we all owe to it in the development of the literary side of our work amongst Moslems.”

From H. E. The Swedish Minister :

“Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord’ (Amos 8: 11) I invoke upon you the blessing of the Lord, that by your activity such famine and such thirst may be relieved.”

From Brigadier Dobbie (commanding Cairo Brigade):

“I value the work of the N.M. Press which is producing and distributing the Word of God and helpful and sound literature in places where they are much needed, and it is very nice to know that they still stand for the Old Truths.”

The Director, at the end of a very long programme, thanked the chairman and all helpers, and then gave a closing address, as follows:

“In the course of our twenty-five years service, we have endeavoured as God has led us, to observe certain great Christian principles:

(1) Spiritual men for spiritual work. Before a man can win others, he must be won himself. Before we were invited to take up this work, the beloved founder made inquiries, and found in the case of each one of us that we had been brought to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus as our own personal Saviour. We cannot now imagine a Literature Society or a publishing-house or bookshop in which prayer is not made several times daily. We pray five or six times a day. No worker ever joins us without evidencing on the one hand spirituality of aim, and on the other loyalty to God's most Holy Word.

(2) Spiritual methods for spiritual work. Again and again we have come up against the problem of raising money for this work. As an illustration of how God provides for us:—One day I sent the Accounts Clerk to try to pay the colporteurs' salaries. When he came back, I said, ‘Did you manage it?’ He said, ‘Yes, Al-Hamdulillah, there were 48 milliemes over!’ I went to bed that night thinking thus: ‘To-morrow morning I must write an article on the subject of providing for our needs, and I shall say that we had in the Bank for the Colportage Account, one shilling—and GOD:’—AND GOD—but how rich I felt! Next morning, news came of a gift of £200 for the Colporteurs; ‘Before they call I will answer.’

(3) Communion with the Unseen. Like Moses, we ‘See Him Who is invisible.’

When we landed in 1905 we had great difficulty in finding suitable premises. Miss Van Sommer prayed very hard that we might not be discouraged at the outset. On the 3rd February, we took the premises; she afterwards told us that on 3rd February God told her she need not pray any more; she knew from that, that her prayers were answered.

(4) Co-operation. We have, all the way along, stood shoulder to shoulder with those who appear to us to be on the 'Rock, Christ Jesus.' When our Publication Committee was formed early in 1905, the Cairo Conference had not been held, and there was no 'Fairhaven' at which missionaries could meet one another. Ours was the first co-operative movement, and from that day to this the chief evangelistic societies have been represented on our Publication Committee.

(5) The King's business required haste.—Please do not misunderstand me; the N.M.P. never hustles, but it hurries up, which is a totally different thing. Granted that educational and other methods are good in their sphere, they seem so SLOW to us. 'The King's business requireth haste.' If I have not visited you in your homes nor joined your Committees, nor been seen on your recreation grounds, I have a reason to give to my Lord and Master, 'The King's business requireth haste.' By giving up commercial work in 1923, we set out to trust God and Him alone. So far from losing money, the tide turned in our favour from the very day that we set out like Caleb to be 'Wholly for the Lord our God.'

(6) But now we come to a deeper principle still. 'Death is the gate of life.' While reading my Bible during the War I was struck with these words, 'Pulling them out of the fire' (Jude 23). As a direct outcome, I was led to start the first purity movement in Egypt. We have been 'pulling them out of the fire' all the time and our Egyptian helpers are still doing it every Thursday night.

But there is more to follow. 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth fruit.' My purity movement has been ignored by some of the most influential people of the country. What of it? If you are going to be a popular missionary, you will never accomplish anything much for the Day of Judgment; hard as it sounds, you must die, die, die; die to reputation, die to all men, but live unto God.

(7) Is there any deeper teaching yet? Yes, I think so. My old friend Gairdner passed on to me, very approvingly, this phrase, 'Evangelise your limitations.' What have been

our limitations? Early poverty—yes, but that has kept us humble. Another limitation has been our loneliness; that has tended to keep us on ‘the Rock.’ A third has been the absence of any one particular Church or Society to care for us, but we have converted this into the principle of ‘belonging to everybody.’

Is there a Great War on? Print for it. Is there an Egyptian Government Censorship on all publications?—work *with* it, not against it! On the first day of the War we had 140 publications. On the last day of the War 280,—NOW, we have 680. God says, ‘I will make all my mountains a way.’ Do not try to tunnel under them, nor to squeeze through them, nor to run away from them, but to claim them for God! These mountains of difficulty are His stepping stones, walk on them with holy joy.

‘STEP OUT ON THE WAVES
THAT WOULD CRUSH YOU!
STEP OUT IN THE STORM
THAT WOULD HUSH YOU!
And you will find,
As you touch the crest
You feared so much,
And walk on its breast,
THERE WAS ONE WALKING THERE,
THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH,—
Walking, watching,
Waiting,—FOR YOU!’”

CHAPTER XVI

Some Final Examples of Personal Guidance.

1. To tell how George Wald came to us, we must look back to 1927. We were then staying at the House of Rest, 10 Finchley Road, N.W., for the last two days before sailing. Going to bed rather disheartened, I was telling God in a subconscious sort of way that I felt rather a failure in the matter of new workers. A voice then seemed to sound in my deaf ears: "Go over to Mrs. Studd and ask about the Colony." But that would be the day before sailing and every hour was already booked. However, as the message seemed to be repeated, I struck a light and entered in my diary to go to Mrs. Studd's, a journey of 1½ hours each way.

Next day, I managed to shorten engagements in the City and went over to Upper Norwood, where I had tea and conference with Mrs. Studd; Mr. Norman Grubb took me over the Camp where I found about 30 men in training. As they were about to have tea, I spoke as they ate. One of them, George Wald, had once seen me in Cairo, and that day—after special prayer for the Moslems—had asked where he might find me, but nobody knew, for London is a large "stack of hay" in which to find a needle. After some correspondence, he volunteered to join our work and was accepted and sent out, and is now (July 1936) still in charge of our Bible and book depot in Jerusalem. How

fortunate that I made time to obey God's message on the last day of my stay in England.

2. News came to Cairo in 1930 that my mother was rapidly failing so—as I could not leave the work—my wife offered to go for me. Being just missionaries, we had to pray over ways and means, and decided that she should sail by the first steamer after 15th June, the day cheap fares would commence. But an insistent voice rang in my ear: "Too late! Too late!" My wife fully agreed with me that, if that were so, then she had better go *at once*, but it only left three days to book passages, pack up, and to arrange for all the young people in our hostel that she was catering for. She barely managed it, but reached England with just sufficient time to pray with and sing to the patient, for my mother passed to the Fuller Life on the 19th June. Had we not obeyed that "Urge" she would have been too late.

3. Our Jerusalem helper, Ibrahim Jameel, though only 52, died in the German hospital on Sunday, 11th October, 1930, of heart failure during a rather slight attack of pneumonia. We loved him dearly and were praying for him on the Saturday, though the case had seemed simple. At teatime a cable came to say that the case was serious. Having someone relating a narrative to us, I could not get to speak to my wife until 5.25; but, whilst listening to others she had, at the same time, heard a message from God; "Go immediately!" I literally snatched up my passport and dashed for the station (fully a mile) and caught the 6.0 train. When I arrived at Jerusalem about 9.0 on Sunday morning,

dear Jameel did not know me. In the evening, we were watching in his room when Najla, the daughter, suddenly threw herself into my arms with a little shriek, for the doctor had just confirmed the passing away. O these earthly griefs. And a family unprovided for.

But if from the Holy Land have come some of my griefs, there have been blessings likewise. The following lovely poetry appeals to me greatly.

YESTERDAY'S GRIEF

The rain that fell a-yesterday is ruby on the roses,
Silver on the poplar leaf, and gold on willow stem;
The grief that chanced a-yesterday is silence that encloses
Holy loves when time and change shall never trouble them.

The rain that fell a-yesterday makes all the hill-sides glisten,
Coral on the laurel and beryl on the grass;
The grief that chanced a-yesterday has taught the soul
to listen
For whispers of Eternity in all the winds that pass.

O faint of heart, storm beaten, this rain will gleam to-morrow
As flame within the columbine and jewels on the thorn;
Heaven in the forget-me-not. Though sorrow may be
sorrow,
Yet sorrow shall be *beauty* in the magic of the morn.

Given me in Palestine : author unknown.

CHAPTER XVII

“Ethiopia (Cush) shall haste to stretch out her hands unto God” (R.V.).—Farewell to Egypt—Visits to Druze Mountain—“Go to Nineveh that great city”—The Shiah of Iraq.

AFTER staying a week in Palestine, re-arranging the work, only ten days were left to prepare for a journey to Sudan to discuss with the Secretary for Education the terms upon which a mission bookshop might be opened at Khartoum. In many ways Ethiopia (of which the mighty A. E. Sudan, ten times the size of England, is one part) is quickly stretching out its hands unto God.

On the way south, a very happy week-end was spent with the Germans at Assuan; 16 years since my last visit to them. Crossing the desert from Wadi Halfa I could have declared I saw large sheets of water and thriving palm trees. But it was just “mirage.”

On the restaurant car, without which one cannot travel in the Sudan, I was needing to speak to the manager and asked the big Sudanese before me to call him. He saluted with “Yes, sir”; and remained standing. But where was the manager of the restaurant? It was the big Sudanese himself. Now in Egypt, on such cars, etc., there is always an European manager over the native waiters; in the Sudan the people are being taught to do the thing by themselves! Many of the Sudan tribes are very fine.

At Khartoum, I was warmly entertained by Rev. Dr. Sowash, an old friend of over 30 years; at Omdurman two nights with Mr. and Mrs. Whitwell, C.M.S.

Our colporteur had amazed many people by his successful trips in Sudan, and we were now hoping to follow-up by means of a united book depôt. Alas! after I had reported favourably, lack of men and means hindered our united project. More recently S.P.C.K. has taken it up.

For my visit to Wad Medani, about 100 miles south of Khartoum in the Sudan Syndicate cotton-field, the Coptic church was borrowed by the Evangelicals, and here, in the afternoon, I preached. Other sermons were preached at Khartoum. But the meeting at Khartoum North (across the river) was a surprising one. When I agreed to speak at what they called a "prayer-meeting" I was not in the least aware that the church building was also the girls' school and auditorium and still less that all the 150 Moslem girls and young women would be present. My address—prepared for communicants!—was quite hopeless, so, at a moment's notice, I snatched up some Arabic texts which I had brought with me, and spoke on these with the aid of the blackboard. My talk was absurdly simple but apparently acceptable.

Coming back from Port Sudan by Khedivial steamer, it was on my heart to wish I could see at least Jiddah, although the rest of El-Hedjaz is strictly taboo. An Englishman on board assured me that it would be quite impossible. Yet the Moslem medical officer, after drinking coffee with me on board, actually invited me to go ashore in his launch. Very hospitable. But Jiddah is Jiddah, and some looked askance, and finally the doctor slipped away, leaving me to get back to my ship as best I could. That was a long journey, for the terribly dangerous reefs outside Jiddah cause the boatmen to zigzag around them.

AFTER 33 years of stiff mental work in Egypt's summer heat my head was now tired and not so well able to stand worries, consequently the Committee at my request relieved me of the post of Director of the whole field which I had occupied for eight years. The question then arose as to whether we could work elsewhere (say at Port Said). But the Committee did not agree to this, and so we proceeded to Jerusalem, there to organise a new distribution area to be called "Near East Area" and involving my travelling over Palestine, Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

Before we left Egypt, our friends the Martins with Mrs. McClenahan of the American University, Miss Jameson (E.G.M.), and other warm friends, organised a wonderful Farewell. The Right Rev. Bishop Gwynne, the Archdeacon, General Dobbie, Sir William Willcocks, the Dean of American University, Madame Khayatt Bey, Dr. R. Wilder, and 200 other Evangelical Christians gathered to praise the Lord whom we served. Valuable Shiraz rugs and other gifts were presented; altogether it was too wonderful for words. Never would we have believed that so many would have gathered or that so many would sympathise with a strong Protestant position such as we had taken up. Rev. Dr. Harvey Philips, who presided, as Chairman of our Publication Committee, gave a long address from which one sentence may be quoted because of its intense importance in these days of shallow compromise.

He said: "You have brought to life and developed through your Inter-Mission, Inter-Church Publication Committee the one outstanding success in Christian Unity. While some of the rest of us have theorized and *talked* about Christian Unity, you have accomplished



AT PRIESTS' CONFERENCE, MT. CARMEL (Chap. 18)
W. L. McClenahan on my left

Photo: Herr Heinrici

the drawing together and *holding* together Egyptians and foreigners in a united effort for the evangelisation of Egypt through the printed page and we rejoice in your success. You have done it *without compromise*, even being willing to stand alone when principle was at stake. . . .”

To God be the glory.

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DRUZE Mountain is the smallest of the States into which the mandated French territory (North of Palestine) is divided. The others are Syria (Damascus to Aleppo), Lebanon (from Tyre to Beyrout and Tripoli), Alaouites (the Mt. of the Alawiyeen, farther North than Lebanon), and Alexandretta (including Antioch, Turkish-speaking).

Jebel-el-Druze acquired much notoriety seven or eight years ago for it rebelled and cost the French something around a couple of years to subdue it. Now it is fairly quiet, having its own “Home Rule” council. There are only 85,000 inhabitants, 7,000 of them being Oriental Christians the rest Druzes (a kind of split from Islam centuries ago), and no Moslems except upon a temporary visit. The Christian and Missionary Alliance, who invited me, told me of one Protestant lay preacher who was—at that time—walking every Sunday from Suweideh the capital to J (an outstation about $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours out) to his preaching and $3\frac{1}{2}$ home at night. He was earning his living and only preached in his spare time because of his love for the Lord.

Missionaries have never yet been allowed to reside in the little capital, for the French still remember the past troubles with this very fanatical, warlike race—

not that missionaries ever had anything to do with those things!—so we took a room at the inn for the night and sent word to a local Christian that we were there. By the time we visited him, he had gathered about a dozen personal acquaintances into his room to hear the Word of Life. I was told, afterwards, that one man started the new life that night.

In the fall of 1934 I went again, visiting several centres and holding simple meetings—hastily arranged when they saw us coming—the congregation sitting upon the floor on three sides of a square, the host and speakers taking the fourth side. But at the Capital we had chairs for the congregation and I was able to use my folding blackboard, for there was a level wall to hang it on. We received a warm welcome everywhere and one outcome was the establishment of a small lending library of N.M.P. books.

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NINEVEH and Babylon. A subject interesting to all students of history and of prophecy. Invitations having come from Iraq and it being necessary to get acquainted with my district, I set out upon a journey of 2,400 miles travelling outwards via Aleppo and Deir-el-Zor but returning direct from Baghdad to Damascus. On the way I called at the Scottish Hospital, Tiberias—just too late to see the Imperial Airways flying boat alight upon the Lake of Galilee. There was encouragement and hospitality from Dr. Torrance and Rev. G. Sloan. Descending to Lake Huleh (Waters of Merom) there was great delay over an Arab from Nejd (Inland Arabia) who had overstayed his visa by a week or two, and the French passport

office refused to allow him to proceed to Damascus even to join a caravan to take him back to his own land of Nejd. No! he must stay on the British side of the frontier. Poor British. The war treaties—chopping up countries such as Syria and dividing between French and English mandates—created problems which must be experienced on the spot to be believed.

After giving a "Chalk-Talk" at Damascus, to the "One-by-One Band" of the British Syrian Mission, I preached for Dr. Macfarland and the Arabic pastor at the Irish Presbyterian Mission church. One lady present said, "I have seen you in Upper Egypt." "What doing?" "You were distributing books upon the train and talking to the people." May Christ, when He cometh, find me so doing.

At Baalbek, I spoke twice at the B.S.M. school, once on "The Power of the Printed Page," and in the evening on "The Power of a Spirit-filled Life." After engagements at Aleppo I went on to Antioch where the driver showed me the ruins of a church said to be built upon the site of the *first* Christian church. The Moslem governor was invited by Rev. W. Lytle to come to church to hear me on the Sunday morning. He arrived with his secretary an hour too soon, but we sat in the Irish Mission garden and talked upon helpful topics such as the Second Coming of Christ, etc. My subject was "That I may know HIM and the power of His resurrection." The governor stood it all, and at the close seemed quite appreciative!

From Aleppo I travelled with the post van, really a Ford motor car with sacks of mail tied on, and with one or more passengers inside. We actually left at 7.0 a.m., and arrived at Deir at 1.40. Seeing that the

distance is 205 miles with roads of various grades and in places no road whatever but a stretch of soft sand, that must be considered fast travelling. After Deir, the lonely traveller obtained a seat in a native car going to the Turkish border, but it was two or three hours late in starting, and then had difficulties with tyres, etc., in the desert. For about two hours not a man could be seen but one's fellow-passengers, who were a rough-looking lot. Reaching a small town at 3.30 we were "dumped down," the driver laconically saying, "Bukra" (To-morrow). The real reason was the insecurity after dark, and the fact that in the North Arabian desert the people get their supper (in November) by 5.0 p.m. Unaware of the local customs, and knowing nobody for 200 miles distance, I strolled out to look about. Entering a café, the atmosphere soon began to feel uncomfortable and the remarks written about our Lord Jesus were quite insulting. Nobody touched me, knowing that I had already reported my presence to the French police station, but they were about 15 to 1 and most of the 15 were very unfriendly. Drinking my coffee, I declined to argue as they requested, and left for the inn. Though only 7.0 p.m. I was already shut out for the night! They let me in and gave me a bed of a sort in a tiny room containing three or four Moslems. Feeling the atmosphere unhealthy I lay down *fully dressed*. Even there I came across a couple of Christians "of sorts" and we three had morning prayer together in a mixture of languages. After two days Mosul was reached.

Mosul, on the opposite bank of the river to Nineveh, is an important city of 70,000 people. The United Mission to Mesopotamia gave me a warm welcome

to inspect their bookshop which was almost entirely stocked with our N.M.P. books from Cairo. Whilst there they took me to call upon two famous people, Mar Shimoun the Nestorian Patriarch and his very active aunt the Lady Surma. These were much heard-of in connection with the Assyrian rebellion.

On the way to Kirkuk, the junction of the Zab with the Tigris was forded. According to the guidebook, this may be a danger-spot during the flood-season. Then I understood the meaning of Nahum 2:6, "The palace shall be *dissolved*." In 606 B.C., a century after being uttered, this was literally fulfilled, for, after Nebuchadnezzar had besieged Nineveh for two years and had failed to pierce the double wall which was on the three land sides only, a very high river-flood washed away the *single* river-wall and the unbaked bricks were literally re-dissolved into Tigris mud. Thus was God's word fulfilled after a whole century.

THE LAND OF OIL was next visited. Kirkuk is a town of 30,000 people; at the time of my visit (Nov. 1931) the *English* population had fallen from about 30 to a dozen. Why? Because the Pipe Line had not then been constructed, and there was no means of transporting the oil except down river to the Persian Gulf thence to Red Sea—a route long and expensive.

My friends of United Mission took me to Baba Ghurghur (Turkish for Gate of Gurgling) the first oil-well, not far from Gehenna where naphtha gas is always burning. This natural gas works its way up from the great oil deposits and the jets have been known for centuries. The day we visited it, we stubbed a walking stick into the ground, and new jets spontaneously ignited.

At Kirkuk, for the first time in my life so far as I remember, I had to preach by interpretation. Always had I given my message in direct Arabic, but here at Kirkuk the people did not know our beautiful "Tongue of the Angels." Poor things, to have to use that wretched Latin-character stuff called "New Turkish!" Meanwhile, I spoke in English and was interpreted into Turkish by an Armenian colporteur.

BABYLON still attracts its hundreds of visitors. The German excavations, made just before the Great War, certainly revealed wonderful things. (I have never gone on any journey to see "sights"; if they are shown to me whilst I am there on business for my Master, that is another matter.) I was visiting Hillah and the two missions there, Miss Strang's "Friends of Arabia" and Rev. A. Edwards' "United Mission." He took me to the two specially holy cities of the Shiah sect of Moslems, Nejef and Kerbelâ. At the latter place—which is really a memorial to the massacre of Husain son of Aly by the "Damascus Gang"—some fine banners were hanging upon the mosque, worded thus: "We will be thy ransom, O Husain." Next night, at Miss Strang's mission, about sixty Moslem men, aged 15 to 30 or so, gave really excellent attention to my address which was upon the text, "Christ hath redeemed us." I made special reference to the Kerbelâ banner, and proceeded along this line: "Husain was brutally murdered, yes we sympathise; but I have come to tell you of our Redeemer, Whose name I bear (Servant of the Redeemer). The great difference is that the Lord Jesus *voluntarily* died for me and for you. He ransomed us by His blood; hence we say that

(in gratitude) we would die for Him. But we shall never die for Him unless we give ourselves to Him."

As a direct result of my visit the N.M. Press asked Mr. A. McCorkle to do book distribution in Iraq for at least part-time.

Our Baghdad Y.M.C.A. friends got me a seat in a car with Moslem passengers going straight across to Damascus. It was not easy to get into Syria because of a suspected case of cholera in Iraq; on arrival we were taken to the quarantine office.

That 530 miles desert journey was delightful, although for most of the way there is no road, nothing but a "track." (Until the Pipe Line was constructed there was only one well all the way, that at Rutba, so all cars had to stop there to report.) Two cars cross together, the one acting as "convoy" to the other. The 530 miles took over a whole day and night, for we stopped in mid-desert to give the drivers an hour's rest. Then, about 2.0 a.m., they suddenly decided to exchange batteries, even laying the screws on the desert sand. Cleverly done. They were just native Syrian Arabs, the kind in which I feel confidence.

I brought back with me from Iraq a piece of soft Babylon brick—soft enough to be cut with a fretsaw, or to have birds carved on it—and also a bit of "Tower of Babel" fireclay, i.e., similar brick fused to solid stone where Birs Nimrod was struck by some kind of firebolt. Soft brick fused to rock!

"Just simple folk like you and me,
Once common clay, by Grace may be
Transmuted, melted, fused to *rock*—
When falls the fire of God."

CHAPTER XVIII

Antioch, Laodicea, Nazareth, Mt. Carmel—Finally, Essex again.

WHAT emotions are aroused by these names! What a privilege to do there a little for the Master Who did so much for me.

Antioch was, in apostolic days, the third city of the Roman Empire, Jerusalem being a secondary place, for after Antioch came Alexandria. Hence the choice of the Holy Spirit to found His church there. Nowadays the comparatively small city of Antioch, with perhaps 45,000 inhabitants, mostly Turks and Armenians, is surrounded by miles of fields watered by the pretty Orontes river. Under these fields must lie invaluable treasures neglected by archæologists until recently. One of the first finds was the handsome floor of a Roman bath—was it ever used by Paul? The Princeton University expedition had uncovered that wonderful mosaic floor the afternoon I arrived, and, by means of overhead scaffolding, were photographing it in haste in order to cover it up again before sunset. As the old citadel was on the mountain, St. Paul probably used that beautiful old Daphne bridge, which can be still walked over (gingerly!).

The *North* of Syria is worked by two Reformed Presbyterian missions commonly called Covenanters. Antioch and Alexandretta district are in the "Irish R.P." field, while to the south of them the state of

Alaouites—(i.e., the mountain, north of Lebanon, inhabited by Aly-ites)—is the field of American R.P. Covenanters. The two missions unite for the annual Summer Bible School which is held one year in Latakia, the next in Antioch. (There were several Laodiceas. Pronounce it with hard c (=k) and you get Ladakîya, or as the French write it, Lattaquié.)

The Summer School started in July 1932, when 40 students attended all the classes for a fortnight. The first year, some of the older men—evangelists for 30-40 years—wondered what they were going to make of it, especially as it was to be in a school classroom and I myself was going to teach them from the blackboard. But by the end of the fortnight they had become quite enthusiastic over the notes they had written in their exercise books, seeing therein material for future sermons. My own task that year was to lecture upon the Epistle to the Philippians. In the evenings I gave more public lectures, two or three being upon the "Power of the Printed Page." A large bookstall supplied our N.M.P. publications, to the surprise of most of the men and women students who had so far known but little of our books.

In 1933 I was sent for to lecture at the second Summer School. But this time my dear wife had just undergone two operations, the second being a very serious one. However, I was released just in time, and Dr. C. McLean and Miss Lakin looked after her in the splendid C.M.J. hospital while the Summer School was on, for I was over two days' journey away. "How were you able to leave her?"—asked the students. At one meeting I told them how I was able to get there, at her express wish, and how—after one operation—she

could not open her eyes for extreme giddiness caused by the anæsthetic: how, then, speak to me? She solved the problem by spelling on her fingers the one word PEACE. This story made a great impression upon our Summer School; it reminded me of the lines written by the late L. M. Warner:

THE WHIRLPOOL'S CENTRE

“In the centre of the whirlpool, while the waters rush
around,
There's a space of perfect stillness, though with turmoil
it is bound.
All is calm; and all is quiet; scarcely e'en a sense of sound.
So with us—despite the conflict—when *in Christ* His
Peace is found.”

There is no other real peace; how comparatively few know the secret.

One visitor to that 1933 Summer School was J.K., a convert who had suffered much for Christ's sake. The Moslems struck him upon the head attempting to murder him, and then left him for dead by the side of the road. He revived and crawled to shelter. Later on, he heard that his enemy was sick and neglected, so took him food and sat with him. That Moslem will never touch J.K. again.

Last year, 1935, I went for the third time, and the subject was “Why I believe in the Deity of Christ.” Also, I was appointed to conduct the early morning prayer meeting; this meeting has greatly improved since we started a “petition box” into which the requests are dropped the night before. By that means, at least 30 short prayers were offered and the meeting became a live one. J.K., as before, had charge of the

petition box. He wears a badge with the words "Repentez-vous" in three languages, and the gendarmerie of Syria, who know him by sight but not his name, often nickname him "Mr. Repent-Ye!" Like all converts he is very keen on our books.

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NAZARETH is a charming spot. It was no great trial for me to go to live there although sorry that it should have become necessary. Dr. W. McLean had examined me and advised me to pull up, also to move to lower altitudes for residence; we therefore retired on my 60th birthday. But perhaps it should be spelt "re-tyred." One has often quoted the words put by St. J. Adcock into the mouth of a wounded Anzac:

"I thank the Lord, though my body's tired, and I'm hobbled so hard and fast,
I've still got a hefty two-legged soul, and it's out with the boys to the last."

Ah! that hefty two-legged soul. It reminds me that the night before Lord Radstock left Egypt, after so much war-work and subsequently visiting the mission-churches, he came to say Good-bye to me. As we parted, he asked for "One word", meaning a tabloid message. My word was:

"EVERGREEN!"

NAZARETH Conference was a great time. It is supposed to be held every two years, once at Ramallah and once at Nazareth. Having been asked to preside over this very mixed gathering of 110 delegates—comprising 12 or 14 different societies and every variety

of denomination from Anglican Bishop's chaplain to Pentecostals—I spent a very happy four days and presided over a score of meetings. It was almost amusing to see how taken aback one young man was: he broke into some discussion by asking the Conference to teach Modernism in the schools, but was promptly pulled-up by the chairman and told he could not speak at all unless he kept to the subject, which was NOT Modernism. It had not occurred to him that a stone-deaf chairman could keep pace with him! But he had overlooked my very efficient secretary who was reporting in Arabic longhand as fast as most European shorthand writers!

Pastor M., of whom I spoke in the third chapter, came from Egypt to give the Bible-Readings, which were most helpful. In the evenings he had the C.M.S. church, down in the valley—the Conference proper being up the hill in C.M.S. Orphanage—the evening gatherings being evangelistic services for the townspeople. A great impression was left upon the writer's own mind by M.'s discourse upon the text, "Behold the Lamb of God." As the speaker developed his appeal, his face shone more and more while he looked steadily across the open church door, and one instinctively turned to look where he was looking. It was the *Glory* on the speaker's face. Dr. Bathgate noticed the same (2 Cor. 4: 6).

Holy memories. Just suited to beloved Nazareth and its carpet of Galilee wild-flowers. But let us not forget the pastor: shall we not pray to God that this dear man may continue both humble enough and also physically strong enough to be used by Him.

MOUNT CARMEL was our next place of sojourn. The workers of German Evangelical Carmel Mission were anxious for me to give English "Chalk-Talks" to their summer visitors at the rest-house called "Karmel-Heim" and also speak at Arabic conferences and so they offered a residence at much less than the usual rental. (The Jews have sent prices soaring.) The position was magnificent, for, from our balcony-terrace, we could see Mt. Hermon, Haifa Bay, the Ladder of Tyre, a good part of Western Galilee, Little Hermon, and the hills of Nazareth, with Mts. of Gilead in the distance. On the other side was the Mediterranean, between us and it being glorious pine forests. (It is certainly an exposed position, in case of war!)

The Heim (Rest-Home) is well known to all workers in the Near East and, around Easter, is full of American, German and English visitors. It has an "atmosphere" all its own. At one time I counted five Hebrew Christians at table, while at another two Moslem converts were there apart from the pastor who often passes through. One German Hebrew Christian left Judaism (in Germany) 29 years ago and has been known to the mission all that time. Having now had to leave Germany—through Herr Hitler's attitude to Jews—we are glad to know that he and his family are now occupying the flat which we had for a time. The hall of that flat was so large that one-third of it sufficed for our Sunday morning services for about 25-30 visitors when loss of voice kept me from the lovely open-air kirk, a clearing in the pine forest.

Conferences are held, in Arabic, for two distinct classes, the one immediately after the other for convenience. For three years I have taken the three

days' conference for Arab priests of the Greek Orthodox Church, while at other times Pastor M. has been the highly acceptable speaker; he is due to take it this year from 2-5 November, D.V., that is, if the political condition of our poor, dear, wretched Palestine permits. Then, as soon as the priests have left, the girl teachers and Biblewomen of the Carmel Mission stations come for their own conference over a week-end. Of course, speakers and hearers eat, sleep and pray together.

We had thought to stay at least a year at Carmel, and then perhaps to get a needed change. However, many things indicated that we should leave sooner, one being health (e.g., my loss of voice), another the financial stress in our mission; then there was every indication of serious trouble not far ahead—not merely the expected trouble with Italy over the war in Abyssinia but a long-foreseen clash with the Arabs. For three years past the abuse heaped upon the English in their Arabic daily papers has been unbelievable. Why in the world was it not censored? Three times has the Government been warned, for on three occasions have I written and drawn attention to the articles published. . . . Enough.

All these things were taken into consideration and also the fact that the German Hebrew Christian could occupy our flat. One insistent word which came to me was this: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? . . . Arise and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do." From this I inferred that we were to go "under sealed orders" and trust for further light thereafter. We arrived in England on 8th November. During the spring, in spite of fog, rain, and general sunlessness, we have been happily occupied,

for "in Christ's kingdom there is no unemployment." Many Bible readings and talks have been delivered in various centres, e.g., London, Colchester, Witham, Rayleigh, Shoeburyness, Gravesend, Bournemouth and Birkenhead. Even at Keswick there were several opportunities.

One thing that has appealed to me has been an effort to make a Survey of Essex to aid the new Essex Prayer Fellowship to pray for revival of Essex. Accordingly—apart from a possible visit to the Near East to seek for sun, and for opportunities of service within one's limited strength—the writer ends as he began—"Essex again."

JEHOVAH JIREH

The following verses, which I wrote for "Friends' Witness" were based upon a meditation in Isaiah 46: 4. The word "us" in the third verse was intended to mean "The Nile Mission Press."¹

"I heard the voice of God say unto me,
'Come thou aside;
For all thy cares, for all thy future needs, I will
provide.
Lonely thy work—and lonelier still will be—
But it shall ever find a friend in Me.'

Days passed to years and still His promise true
Hath never failed;
Dangers and perils hedged our lonely path,
But he prevailed.
When, in our testing day, we stood alone,
He rallied other helpers—of his own.

¹ J. L. Oliver, secretary, Nile House, Tunbridge Wells.

Our work has grown, but all our growing needs
Hath he supplied,
Swift as a bird has flown the Gospel Page
Both far and wide.

Midst changing methods—though no change of aim—
His Word ne'er changes, He remains the same.

'Twas He that called us to the 'Promised Land'
Those Holy Fields;
He'll keep us sowing till the precious seed
Its harvest yields.
What though at times we cannot see the way?
His land He careth for; He bids us stay.

Dost feel the burden of advancing years?
List to His voice,
'Canst count the stars?—so great shall be thy seed;
Faintheart, rejoice!
I made this work; believe My promise true:—
"E'en to hoar hairs I'll carry it and you".'

JEHOVAH JIREH.